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SPURGEON'S
ILLUSTRATIVE ANECDOTES

Spurgeon's Illustrative Anecdotes

Selected and Classified by

REV. LOUIS ALBERT BANKS, D. D.
Author of "Anecdotes and Morals," "Windows for Sermons," etc.

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COMPILER'S PREFACE

The name of Charles H. Spurgeon stands before the whole world as the highest since the name of Wesley and Whitefield as a successful preacher of the several gospels in such a way as to win men to Christ. His individual sermons are still selling by hundred thousands and men are still being converted to Christ in all parts of the world through the reading of his printed words. It cannot help but be of interest to the preacher who desires to be a soul winner to become acquainted with the anecdotes and illustrations used by this man who was so marvelously blessed of God in the salvation of souls. In this book I have gathered Spurgeon's stories. Some of them were repeated again and again in his volumes of sermons and show the value which he places on them and the success with which he used them. I send them forth with a warm-hearted desire that on the tongue of the multitude of preachers everywhere they shall go forth with new life and continue to be winged arrows of the gospel.

LOUIS ALBERT BANKS.

Denver, Col.

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Spurgeon's Illustrative Anecdotes

AFFLICTION

Blessings of Affliction.—God has beauties for every part of the world; and he has beauties for every place of experience? There are views to be seen from the tops of the Alps that you can never see elsewhere. Ay, but there are beauties to be seen in the depths of the dell that ye could never see on the tops of the mountains; there are glories to be seen on Pisgah, wondrous sights to be beheld when by faith we stand on Tabor; but there are also beauties to be seen in our Gethsemanes, and some marvelously sweet flowers are to be culled by the edge of the dens of the leopards. Men will never become great in divinity until they become great in suffering. "Ah!" said Luther, "affliction is the best book in my library;" and let me add, the best leaf in the book of affliction is that blackest of all the leaves, the leaf called heaviness, when the spirit sinks within us, and we can not endure as we could wish.

Affliction the Test of Sonship.—Affliction is the seal of the Lord's election. I remember a story of Mr. Mack, who was Baptist minister in Northamptonshire. In his youth he was a soldier, and calling on Robert Hall, when his regiment marched through Leicester, that great man became interested in him, and procured his release from the ranks. When he went to preach in Glasgow, he sought out his aged mother, whom he had not seen for many years. He knew his mother the moment he

saw her; but the old lady did not recognize her son. It so happened that when he was a child, his mother had accidentally wounded his wrist with a knife. To comfort him she cried, "Never mind, my bonnie bairn, your mither will ken you by that when ye are a man." When Mack's mother would not believe that a grave, fine-looking minister could be her own child, he turned up his sleeve and cried, "Mither, mither, dinna ye ken *that?*" In a moment they were in each other's arms. Ah, brethren, the Lord knows the spot of his children. He acknowledges them by the mark of correction. What God is doing to us in the way of trouble and trial is but his acknowledgment of us as true heirs, and the marks of his rod shall be our proof that we are not bastards, but true sons.

AMBITION

Seek the Higher Things.—Some years ago, there was a crossing-sweeper in Dublin, with his broom, at the corner, and in all probability his highest thoughts were to keep the crossing clean, and look for the pence. One day, a lawyer put his hand upon his shoulder, and said to him, "My good fellow, do you know that you are heir to a fortune of ten thousand pounds a year?" "Do you mean it?" said he. "I do," he said. "I have just received the information; I am sure you are the man." He walked away, *and he forgot his broom.* Are you astonished? Why, who would not have forgotten a broom when suddenly made possessor of ten thousand a year? So, I pray that some poor sinners, who have been thinking of the pleasures of the world, when they hear that there is hope, and that there is heaven to be had, will forget the deceitful pleasures of sin, and follow after higher and better things.

True Greatness.— I had a good friend who preserved the axle-tree of the truck in which he wheeled home his goods when he first came to London. It was placed over his front door, and he never blushed to tell how he came up from the country, worked hard, and made his way in the world. I like this a deal better than the affected gentility which forgets the lone half-crown which pined in solitude in their pockets when they entered this city. They are indignant if you remind them of their poor old father in the country, for they have discovered that the family is very ancient and honorable; in fact, one of their ancestors came over with the Conqueror. I have never felt any wish to be related to that set of vagabonds; but tastes differ, and there are some who think that they must be superior beings because they are descended from Norman freebooters. Nobodies suddenly swell as if they were everybody. Observe that Jacob does not say, "Years ago I was at home with my father Isaac, a man of large estate." Nor does he talk of his grandfather Abraham as a nobleman of an ancient family in Ur, of the Chaldees, who was entertained by monarchs. No, he was not so silly as to boast of aristocracy and wealth, but he frankly owns his early poverty:— "With my staff, a poor, lonely, friendless man, I crossed this Jordan, and now I am become two bands." It humbles him to think of what he was, but at the same time it strengthens him in prayer; for in effect he pleads, "Lord, hast thou made two bands of me that Esau may have the more to destroy? Hast thou given me these children that they may fall by the sword?" So again I say, that which humbled also encouraged him: he found his strength in prayer in those very things which furnished motives for lowliness.

Noble Aspiration.— I have often used an illustration taken from a person who teaches the art of growing taller. I do not believe in that art: we shall not add a cubit to

our stature just yet. But part of this professor's exercise is, that in the morning, when you get up, you are to reach as high as ever you can, and aim a little higher every morning, though it be only the hundredth part of an inch. By that means you are to grow. This is so with faith. Do all you can, and then do a little more: and when you can do that, then do a little more than you can. Always have something in hand that is greater than your present capacity. Grow up to it, and when you have grown up to it, grow more. By many little additions a great house is built. Brick by brick up rose the pyramid. Believe and yet believe. Trust and have further trust. Hope shall become faith, and faith shall ripen to full assurance and perfect confidence in God Most High.

Lofty Ambition.— "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Rise to the utmost possible height. Fulfill your calling to its loftiest degree. Not only do all that you are sure you can do, but aim at something which as yet is high up among the questions. Say to yourself, "Who knoweth?" That is what the ambitious man says when he aspires to be great. When Louis Napoleon was shut up in the fortress of Ham, and everybody ridiculed his foolish attempts upon France, yet he said to himself, "Who knows? I am the nephew of my uncle, and may yet sit upon the imperial throne," and he did so before many years had passed. I have no desire to make any man ambitious after the poor thrones, and honors, and riches of this world; but I would fain make you all ardently ambitious to honor God and bless men. Who knows? Does anybody know what God may do by you? Does anybody know what capacities slumber within your bosom?

APPEARANCES

Appearances Deceptive.— I remember conversing with a person, who was concerned in one of the great speculations which brought loss and ruin to many, and as I looked into his honest face and heard his open-hearted talk, I said to myself, "This is not a man who is capable of robbery. He is a plain, blunt, farmer-like sort of a man, who might even be the victim of the confidence trick." I afterward learned that this is the usual style of a man who puffs a company, or betrays a trust. Of course if a man looks like a thief, you button up your pockets, and smile if he invites you to take shares; but you are off your guard when the man appears to be the embodiment of simple honesty.

ATONEMENT

The Christian's Ruby Ring.— One of our kings once gave a ring to his favorite, and said to him, "I know that at the council to-morrow a charge of heresy will be brought against you; but, when you come in, answer them if you will, but you need be in no fear; if you find yourself brought to a strait, simply show them the ring, and they will go no further." It is even so with us; the Lord has given us the precious blood of Christ to be like a ruby ring upon our finger, and now we know how far conscience may go, and how far accusations from Satan may go; we have only to produce that token and bar all further proceedings. "He that believeth in him is not condenmed," neither can he be.

Christ the Sin-Bearer.— An old servant was once carrying a large bough of a tree to have it cut into pieces to make a fire. A little boy, one of the family, seeing the end of it dragging along the ground and making it very

heavy, came and took hold of the end, and the burden grew light. Then said the servant, "Ah! Master Frank, I wish you could take hold of one end of the greater burden that I have to carry: I have a burden of sin; the more I drag it about, the heavier it becomes. I wish Jesus Christ would take hold of one end of it." The little boy said, "My mother told me, yesterday, that Jesus Christ carries all our sins; therefore you do not want Jesus Christ to drag one end of it: he will take the whole of it." The poor woman, who had been long seeking rest, found it by that remark of the child. Yes, Jesus does take your sins. If thou trustest Christ, this is the evidence that all thy sins are laid on him.

"Sinner, nothing do,
Either great or small;
Jesus did it, did it all,
Long, long ago."

Our Substitute.— You remember that in Prussia there was a law which exempted the only son of a widow from going to war; but it is said that so closely were they driven for recruits, that the law was for a time rescinded, and the widow's only son was taken. Suppose such a thing happened here, and there should be a widow whose only son was demanded of her. See her come forward, saying, "Ay, take him; my country is dearer to me even than he is." She puts him forward, and says, "Go forth, my son, to die if it be necessary; I give thee up, I give thee willingly." You see the red, red eye of the widow; she hath wiped it dry, but she hath wept in secret; and if we steal behind the door when her son is gone, and see her pouring out whole floods of sorrow, we can tell how great must have been her love for her country which made her give up him — her all. Beloved, we never should know Christ's love in all its heights and

depths if he had not died; nor could we tell the Father's deep affection if he had not given his Son to die.

Christ Wins Us by Dying for Us.— There is a story told of the Covenanters — of one named Patrick Welwood — whose house was surrounded at a time when a minister had for security been hidden there. Claverhouse's dragoons were at the door, and the minister had fled. The master of the house was summoned, and it was demanded of him, "Where is the minister?" "He is gone; I can not tell whither, for I know not." But they were not satisfied with that; they tortured him, and since he could not tell them where he was (for in reality he did not know), they left him, after inflicting upon him the torture of the thumbscrew; and they took his sister, a young girl who was living in the house. I believe she did know where the minister was concealed, but on taking her they asked her, and she said, "No, I can die myself, but I can never betray God's servant, and never will, as he may help me." They dragged her to the water's edge, and making her kneel down, they determined to put her to death. But the captain said, "Not yet; we will try to frighten her;" and sending a soldier to her, he knelt down, and applying a pistol to her ear, she was bidden to betray the minister or die. The click of the pistol was heard in her ear, but the pistol was not loaded. She slightly shivered, and the question was again asked of her. "Tell us now," said they, "where he is, or we will have your life." "Never, never," said she. A second time the endeavor was made; this time a couple of carabines were discharged, but into the air, in order to terrify her. At last they resolved upon really putting her to death, when Trail, the minister, who was hidden somewhere near, being aroused by the discharge of guns, and seeing the poor girl about to die for him, sprang forward, and cried, "Spare that maiden's blood, and take mine; this poor innocent girl, what hath she done?"

The poor girl was dead even then with the fright; but the minister had come prepared to die himself, to save her life. O, my friends, I have sometimes thought that her heroic martyrdom was somewhat like the blessed Jesus. He comes to us, and says, "Poor sinner, wilt thou be my friend?" We answer, "No." "Ah! I will make thee so," saith he, "I will die for thee;" and he goes to die on the cross.

The Atonement a Sword.— When a man gets a sword, you cannot be quite certain how he will use it. A gentleman has purchased a very expensive sword with a golden hilt and an elaborate scabbard; he hangs it up in his hall, and exhibits it to his friends. Occasionally he draws it out from the sheath ,and he says, "Feel how keen is the edge!" The precious blood of Jesus is not meant for us merely to admire and exhibit. We must not be content to talk about it, and extol it, and do nothing with it; but we are to use it in the great crusade against unholiness and unrighteousness, till it is said of us, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb." This precious blood is to be used for overcoming, and consequently for holy warfare. We dishonor it if we do not use it to that end.

The Atonement Must be Proclaimed.— The other day, when I was inquiring about the welfare of a certain congregation, my informant told me that there had been few additions to the church, altho the minister was a man of ability and industry. Furthermore, he let me see the reason of the failure, for he added, "I have attended there for several years, and during all that time I do not remember hearing a sermon upon the sacrifice of Christ. The atonement is not denied, but it is left out." If this be so, what is to become of our churches? If the light of the atonement is put under a bushel, the darkness will be dense. In omitting the cross you have cut the tendon Achilles of the church: it can-

not move, nor even stand, when this is gone. Holy work falls to the ground: it faints and dies when the blood of Jesus is taken away. The cross must be put in the front more than ever by the faithful, because so many are unfaithful.

A Joyous Verdict.— You may have seen a well-painted picture called "Waiting for the Verdict." What interest is displayed on every face! What fear and trembling upon the countenance of the prisoner! In his wife and the friends around him, what anxiety is seen! "Waiting for the Verdict" is a sad picture; but what another might be drawn of The Favorable Verdict Received! The prisoner is acquitted! O what joy! It is not possible to bring in a verdict of "Not Guilty" for you and for me, for we are undoubtedly guilty; but yet it is possible by the process of substitution and divine grace to bring in a just verdict by which it is witnessed that "There is now no condemnation."

Christ Suffering in our Stead.— You know the story, the very excellent story, which I think was first told by Mr. Moody, of the man who in the French war was drawn for a soldier, but a friend stepped in, and was accepted as his substitute. That substitute served in the war till he was slain in battle. The man for whom he served was drawn a second time, but he declined to serve. He appeared before the court, and pleaded that he had been drawn once, had served in the war by his substitute, and must now be regarded as dead, because his representative had been killed. He pleaded that his substitute's service was practically his service, and it is said that the law allowed his plea. Assuredly it is according to divine equity, even if it be not according to human law. No criminal can be hanged a second time; one death is all the law requires: believers died in Christ unto sin once, and now they penally die no more. Our condemnation has spent itself upon our gracious representative. The

full vials of divine wrath against sin have been poured upon the head of the great Shepherd, that this sheep might go free; and therein is our joy, our comfort, our security. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."

The Sinner's Ransom.— But there stands forth on our behalf "the Wonderful, the Counsellor;" he takes his brief in hand and begins to plead. Hark what he says, and see how all opinion is turned at once! "I confess," says he, "that every word is true that the last accuser has said. My client pleads guilty to every charge; but I have a full pardon signed by God's own hand, purchased by my own blood;" and, stripping himself, he shows his breast, and bares his arm, and says, "These were given to me of my Father before the foundation of the world. I bare their sins in my own body on the tree. My Father justified them; I pardoned them." And then, mounting to the highest point, he reaches the climax of grace as he exclaims, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Canst thou, O God? Hast thou not justified? I cannot, for I died." Then he sits down, in triumph, saying, "Whom he justified, them he also glorified. Nothing shall be able to separate them from the love of God." Shall not each ransomed sinner shout with joy?

BACKSLIDERS

A Lost Fellowship.— I once asked a brother how long it was since he had enjoyed fellowship with Jesus. His reply was remarkable. "I feel sorry," said he, "you have asked me that question, and yet I must thank you. Had you asked me whether I continued in prayer, I would have said 'Yes,' for, with more or less fervor, I do constantly pray. Had you inquired whether I endeavored to walk honestly and uprightly before my

fellow creatures, I should have said, 'Yes, thank God, I hope I have not slipped with my feet;' but when you say, 'How long is it since you really have had fellowship with Jesus?' I blush to own that many a day has passed since I have known this high privilege." Is that so with you, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ? If so, it is very, very sad.

Backsliders Reclaimed.— I remember one Monday afternoon, when we had been waiting upon the Lord in prayer ever since seven o'clock in the morning, that there came a most remarkable wave of prayer over the assembly. And then two backsliders got up and prayed one after the other. According to their own account, they had been very bad fellows indeed, and had sorely transgressed against God; but there they were, broken-hearted and fairly broken down. It was a sight to make angels rejoice as their tears flowed. Certainly their sobs and cries touched the hearts of all of us who were assembled. I thought to myself, "Then God *is* blessing us, for when backsliders come back it is a proof that God has visited his people.

THE BIBLE

The Charm of the Bible.— There is such a charm about the Bible, that he who reads it little may never perhaps feel the whole of it. It is something like the Maelstrom you have heard of, only in a different and more excellent sense. The Maelstrom is a great whirlpool on the coast of Norway. A ship at a long distance from it will feel a little of its attracting influence, a very little, yet enough to make it veer from its course; but the nearer it floats to the centre the stronger becomes the current, and the more forcibly is the vessel carried along by it, until at last, if the ship should be so unhappy as to near it, it would whirl round at a tremendous rate until it was thoroughly engulphed in its depths. In a higher

and better sense the like is true of the Bible. The nearer you go to it, and the more closely you study it, the more rapidly do you revolve in its circles, the more voraciously do you devour its contents, until at last you are swallowed up in its glory, and long for nothing else than to prove the heights and depths of this bliss unfathomable — the love of God revealed to us in Christ, in his sacred Word. Truly, of this book, we may say, "Thou hast the dew of thy youth."

The Light of the Bible.— I recollect a story of Mr. Hume, who so constantly affirmed that the light of reason is abundantly sufficient. Being at a good minister's house one evening, he had been discussing the question, and declaring his firm belief in the sufficiency of the light of nature. On leaving, the minister offered to hold him a candle to light him down the steps. He said "No; the light of nature would be enough; the moon would do." It so happened that the moon was covered with a cloud, and he fell down the steps. "Ah!" said the minister, "you had better have had a little light from above, after all, Mr. Hume." So, supposing the light of nature to be sufficient, we had better have a little light from above, too, and then we shall be sure to be right. Better have two lights than only one. The light of creation is a bright light. God may be seen in the stars; his name is written in gilt letters on the brow of night; you may discover his glory in the ocean waves, yea, in the trees of the field; but it is better to read it in two books than in one. You will find it here more clearly revealed; for he has written this book himself, and he has given you the key to understand it, if you have the Holy Spirit. Ah, beloved, let us thank God for this Bible; let us love it; let us count it more precious than much fine gold.

The Neglected Bible.— And I recollect a person once coming to me in private; I spoke to her about her soul, she told me how deeply she felt, how she had a desire to serve God, but she found another law in her members. I turned to a passage in Romans, and read to her, "The good that I would I do not; and the evil which I would not that I do!" She said, "Is that in the Bible? I did not know it." I did not blame her, because she had no interest in the Bible till then; but I did not wonder that there could be found persons who knew nothing about such a passage. Ah! you know more about your ledgers than your Bible; you know more about your day-books than what God has written; many of you will read a novel from beginning to end, and what have you got? A mouthful of froth when you have done. But you cannot read the Bible; that solid, lasting, substantial, and satisfying food goes uneaten, locked up in the cupboard of neglect; while anything that man writes, a catch of the day, is greedily devoured.

Bible Precious Through Use.— That young man over there says it is a "bore;" that is the word he uses. He says, "My mother says to me, when you go up to town, read a chapter every day. Well, I thought I would please her, and I said I would. I am sure I wish I had not. I did not read a chapter yesterday, or the day before. We were so busy, I could not help it." You do not love the Bible, do you? "No, there is nothing in it which is interesting." Ah, I thought so. But a little while ago *I* could not see anything in it. Do you know why? Blind men cannot see, can they? But when the Spirit touches the scales of the eyes, they fall off; and when he puts eye-salves on, then the Bible becomes precious. I remember a minister who went to see an old lady, and he thought he would give her some precious promises out of the word of God. Turning to one, he saw written in the margin "P.," and he asked, "What does this

mean?" "That means precious, sir." Further down, he saw "T. and P.," and he asked what the letters meant. "That," she said, "means tried and proved, for I have tried and proved it." If you have tried God's word and proved it — if it is precious to your soul, then you are Christians; but those persons who despise the Bible, have "neither part nor lot in the matter."

Eating God's Word.— I have many an old book in my library in which there have been book-worms, and I have sometimes amused myself with tracing a worm. I do not know how he gets to the volume originally, but being there he eats his way into it. He bores a hole in a direct line, and sometimes I find that he dies before he gets half-way through the tome. Now and then a worm has eaten his way right through from one wooden cover to another; yes, and through the cover also. This was a most successful book-worm. Few of us can eat our way quite so far. I am one of the book-worms that have not got half-way into my Bible yet; but I am eating my way as fast as I can. This one thing I have proved to myself beyond all question: I shall never, never exhaust this precious Book; much less shall I exhaust the wondrous person of my divinely-blessed Lord. He is that bread which came down from heaven. He is utterly inexhaustible.

BLESSINGS

The Chain of Blessings.— You sometimes see a railway carriage or truck, fastened on to what goes before; but there is also a great hook behind. What is that for? Why, to fasten something else behind, and so to lengthen the train. Any one mercy from God is linked on to all the mercy that went before it; but provision is also made for adding future blessing. All the years to come are guaranteed by the ages past.

Christ Bringing Blessings.— I saw a fine carriage stopping the other day at a very humble hovel; and I thought to myself, "that carriage is not stopping there to collect rent, or to borrow a broom." Oh, no; that lady yonder is calling round and visiting the poor, and I doubt not she has taken in some nourishment to an invalid. I hope it was so: and I am sure my Lord Jesus Christ's carriage never stops at my door to get anything out of me: whenever he comes he brings countless blessings with him.

The Secret of Finding Blessing.— Do you remember the story of Mr. Erskine and the good lady who went to hear him preach at the communion? It was such sweet preaching, she thought she had never heard the like. So, after service, she asked, Who the gentleman was that preached to-day; and, on being told that it was Mr. Ebenezer Erskine, she said, "I will come and hear him again next Sunday morning." She went, she listened, and she thought to herself,— "Well, this is very dry, very heavy preaching." She was not at all comforted by it; then, like a foolish woman, as I should think she must have been, she went into the vestry, and said, "Oh, Mr. Erskine, I heard you last Sabbath with much pleasure, sir; I never was so edified; and I came again this morning, but I have been dreadfully disappointed." So the good man said, very calmly, "Pray, madam, when you came to the kirk last Sunday, what did you come for?" She said, "I came to communion, sir." "To have fellowship with Christ, I suppose?" he asked. "Yes, sir." "Well, you came for it, and you had it. And pray, what did you come here this morning for?" Said she, "I came to hear you, sir." "And, you had it, woman," said he, "you had it, and you had not anything more than that." Well, now, when people come merely to hear a minister, or for custom's sake, or for form's sake, do they not always get what they come

for? If people come to find fault, we always give them plenty of our imperfections to be entertained with, so they need not be disappointed. If others come merely out of custom, they say, "Well, this is my work, I have performed my duty." Of course it is, but if you had come in through the door — that is, looking to Christ, looking for Christ, desiring not to see the preacher but the Lord, not to get the word of man but the Word of God, to your soul — I believe you would have found pasture. Brethren, the sheep want pasture. No other food will suit them. So your soul wants heavenly truth, and if you come to the house of God through Christ, you will get it. If you turn to the Bible through Christ, you will find it a rich storehouse. If you come to prayer through the door of Christ, you will find it comforting, and so you shall find pasture.

CHRIST

Christ Best Known in Heaven.— *Christ will be best known in eternity.* The riches of Christ are not so much to be enjoyed here as *there.* He will give you by the road and on the way to heaven all your needs; your place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks, your bread shall be given you, and your water shall be sure; but it is there, *there,* THERE, where you shall hear the song of them that triumph, the shout of them that feast. My dear hearer, if you get Christ, you have obtained riches which you can take with you in the hour of death. The rich man clutched his bags of money, and as he laid them on his heart, he murmured, "They will not do; they will not do; take them away!" If you receive Jesus into your heart, he will be death's best antidote. When your disembodied spirit quits this poor clay carcass, as it must, what will your silver and gold do for you then? What will your farms and your broad acres

do for you then? You must leave them all behind. Even if men buy you a coffin of gold, or bury you in a sarcophagus of marble, yet of what avail will that be? But oh! if you have Christ, you can fly up to heaven to your treasure, and there you shall be rich to all the intents of bliss, world without end.

Drop Into Christ's Arms.— Your condition is like that of a child in a burning house, who, having escaped to the edge of a window, hung on by the window-sill. The flames were pouring out of the window underneath, and the poor lad would soon be burnt, or falling would be dashed to pieces; he therefore held on with the clutch of death. He did not dare to relax his grasp till a strong man stood underneath, and said, "Boy! drop! drop! I'll catch you." Now, it was no saving faith for the boy to believe that the man was strong — that was a good help towards faith — but he might have known that and yet have perished; it was faith when the boy let go and dropped down into his big friend's arms. There are you, sinner, clinging to your sins or to your good works. The Savior cries, "Drop! drop into my arms!"

The Triumph of Jesus.— When a Roman general had performed great feats in a foreign country, his highest reward was that the Senate should decree him a triumph. Of course there was a division of spoil made on the battle-field, and each soldier and each captain took his share; but every man looked forward rapturously to the day when they should enjoy the public triumph. On a set day the gates of Rome were thrown open; the houses were all decorated; the people climbed to the roofs, or stood in great crowds along the streets. The gates were opened, and by and by the first legion began to stream in with its banners flying, and its trumpets sounding. The people saw the stern warriors as they marched along the street returning from their blood-red fields of battle.

After one half of the army had thus defiled, your eye would rest upon one who was the center of all attraction: riding in a noble chariot, drawn by milk-white horses, there came the conqueror himself, crowned with the laurel crown and standing erect. Chained to his chariot were the kings and mighty men of the regions which he had conquered. Immediately behind them came part of the booty. There were carried the ivory and the ebony, and the beasts of the different countries which he had subdued. After these came the rest of the soldiery, a long, long stream of valiant men, all of them sharing the triumphs of their captain. Behind them came banners, the old flags which had floated aloft in the battle, the standards which had been taken from the enemy. And after these, large painted emblems of the great victories of the conqueror. Upon one there would be a huge map depicting the rivers which he had crossed, or the seas through which his navy had found their way. Everything was represented in a picture, and the populace gave a fresh shout as they saw the memorial of each triumph. And behind, with the trophies, would come the prisoners of less eminent rank. Then the rear would be closed with sound of trumpet, adding to the acclamation of the throng. It was a noble day for old Rome. Children would never forget those triumphs; they would reckon their years from the time of one triumph to another. High holiday was kept. Women cast down flowers before the conqueror, and he was the true monarch of the day.

Now, our apostle had evidently seen such a triumph, or read of it, and he takes this as a representation of what Christ did on the cross. He says, "Jesus made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Have you ever thought that the cross could be the scene of a triumph? Most of the old commentators can

scarcely conceive it to be true. They say, "This must certainly refer to Christ's resurrection and ascension." But, nevertheless, so saith the Scripture, even on the cross Christ enjoyed a triumph. Yes! while those hands were bleeding, the acclamations of angels were being poured upon his head. Yes, while those feet were being rent with the nails, the noblest spirits in the world were crowding round him with admiration. And when upon that blood-stained cross he died in agonies unutterable, there was heard a shout such as never was heard before for the ransomed in heaven, and all the angels of God with loudest harmony chanted his praise. Then was sung, in fullest chorus, the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, for he had indeed cut Rahab and sorely wounded the dragon. Sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever, King of kings, and Lord of lords.

Christ the Bond of Union.— I have often noticed that as soon as we begin to discourse upon the atoning death of our divine Lord, we are at home with one another. There may be brethren present from various churches, and they may not be well at ease when we handle other subjects, but when we come to the precious blood we come to the heart of the matter, and are all at one. This is one of the secret signs of our spiritual free-masonry. I have had my heart warmed and cheered against my own will sometimes by devout writers, whose doctrinal theories I do not believe, and whose church I could not join, and yet when they write about my Lord they win my heart. *"Aliquid Christi,"* as one old divine used to say: the *something of Christ* in them awakens our affections and draws us nigh. Even books which are corrupt with sacramentarianism have occasionally such a sweet savor of Christ in them that we

cannot utterly cast them away, but feel bound very carefully to pare the apple, and cut out the rotten places, and remove the objectionable core, for the sake of the sweet morsels flavored with the love of Christ. As the sweet honey-bearing flowers attract the bees, so does the name of Jesus draw all his saints to him, and so to each other. Give me your hand, my brother, if you also know my Lord we belong to the same family, the infallible mark of the redeemed is upon us both.

Christ our Priest.— If her Majesty should give me the title-deeds of an estate, signing the transfer with her own hand and seal, I should smile at the lackey who should kindly offer to add his authority to her Majesty's act and deed. Where the word of a king is there is power, and this is preeminently true where the word of the King of kings is concerned. I have believed in Jesus Christ as he is set forth on the authority of God himself, and who are you, Sir Priest, to come between me and God?

The Soul's Food and Drink.— Consider, too, that if Christ be both meat and drink, *what need we have of him!* because there is no need in the world, I suppose, that is greater than the need of meat and drink. You hear the shout of "Fire!" in the street, and it startles you; but those who have ever heard the cry of "Bread!" in a bread riot, say that the alarm of "Fire!" is nothing to it. There is something so sharp, so awful, so determined, so ferocious, so like the yell of wild beasts, about men and women that scream for bread, that it is the most awful of sounds. And "Drink!" What a word that must be for a number of poor wretches shut up as they were in the Black Hole of Calcutta, raving through those little windows at the guard outside for drink; and stretching out their hands and beseeching them to turn their carbines upon them, and shoot them,

rather than let them die there a lingering death of suffocation and thirst! How when a little water was passed in they fought and struggled for it, if so be a man might but get a drop, or suck a handkerchief that had been dipped into it, and linger on a little longer. Now, nobody can have a greater need than an actual want of bread and want of water; but that is what you want, my dear friends who are without Christ; your soul wants bread and water. Think not that you are rich and increased in goods if you have not Christ, for in truth you are naked, and poor, and miserable. If you do not trust him, love him, serve him, your poor soul has not even a drop to drink.

Wear Christ's Uniform.— You know how the recruiting sergeant makes a soldier: not by asking the man to give him something, but by getting him to take the Queen's shilling. Take Christ — that is God's enlisting money — and you are enlisted. Do not bring any thing, but take the water of life freely. If you will trust the Lord Jesus, and take him to be your salvation, you are then enlisted as a soldier of Jesus. Oh! may you have grace to do that! But recollect, all soldiers have to fight. One of the first things you will have to do, if you become a Christian, is to carry a cross. Ah! you do not like it. "His yoke is easy, and his burden is light;" take it upon you: and yet to carnal shoulders the cross is very galling, and nothing but grace can make it light. You will have to give up your sins; you will have to give up your empty pleasures; you will have henceforth to bear witness for Christ before a crooked and perverse generation. Do not think to be Christ's soldier, and yet not wear his livery. No, you must put on his regimentals; you must wear his crest — his crest is the cross; you must take his shield, the shield of faith; and his sword, which is the sword of the Spirit, the word of

God, and resting alone on him, depending alone upon his merit, you shall certainly win the victory.

Christ in the Dying Hour.— There is a young girl in heaven now, once a member of this church. I went with one of my beloved deacons to see her when she was very near her departure. She was in the last stage of consumption. Fair and sweetly beautiful she looked, and I think I never heard such syllables as those which fell from that girl's lips. She had had disappointments, and trials, and troubles, but all these she had not a word to say about, except that she blessed God for them; they had brought her nearer to the Savior. And when we asked her whether she was not afraid of dying, "No," she said, "the only thing I fear is this, I am afraid of living, lest my patience should wear out. I have not said an impatient word yet, sir; I hope I shall not. It is sad to be so very weak, but I think if I had my choice, I would rather be here than be in health, for it is very precious to me; I know that my Redeemer liveth, and I am waiting for the moment when he shall send his chariot of fire to take me up to him." I put the question, "Have you not any doubts?" "No, none, sir; why should I? I clasp my arms around the neck of Christ." "And have not you any fear about your sins?" "No, sir, they are all forgiven; I trust the Savior's precious blood." "And do you think that you will be as brave as this when you come actually to die?" "Not if he leaves me, sir, but he will never leave me, for he has said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.'"

Sanctuary in Christ.— I saw the other day a remarkable picture, which I shall use as an illustration of the way of salvation by faith in Jesus. An offender had committed a crime for which he must die, but it was in the olden time when churches were considered to be

sanctuaries in which criminals might hide themselves and so escape. See the transgressor — he rushes towards the church, the guards pursue him with their drawn swords, all athirst for his blood; they pursue him even to the church door. He rushes up the steps, and just as they are about to overtake him and hew him in pieces on the threshold of the church, out comes the bishop, and holding up the crucifix, he cries, "Back, back! stain not the precincts of God's house with blood! stand back!" and the guards at once respect the emblem and stand back, while the poor fugitive hides himself behind the robes of the priest. It is even so with Christ. The guilty sinner flies to the cross — flies straight away to Jesus, and though Justice pursues him, Christ lifts up his wounded hands and cries to Justice, "Stand back! stand back! I shelter this sinner; in the secret place of my tabernacle do I hide him; I will not suffer him to perish, for he puts his trust in me."

Christ in the Heart a Disinfectant.— Myrrh, again was used as a *disinfectant.* When the fever is abroad, we know people who wear little bags of camphor about their necks. They may be very good; I do not know. But the Orientals believed that, in times of pest and plague, a little bag of myrrh worn between the breasts would be of essential service to whoever might carry it. And there doubtless is some power in myrrh to preserve from infectious disease. Well, brethren, certain I am it is so with Christ. You have to go into the world, which is like a great lazar-house; but if you carry Christ with you, you will never catch the world's disease. A man may be worth never so much money — he will never get worldly if he keepeth Christ on his heart. A man may have to tug and toil for his livelihood, and be very poor — he will never be discontented and murmuring if he lives close to Christ. Oh you who have to handle

the world, see to it that you handle the Master more than the world. Some of you have to work with drunken and swearing men; others are cast into the midst of frivolities; oh, take my Master with you! and sin's plagues can have no influence upon your moral nature.

For Christ's Sake.— I met, in one of Samuel Rutherford's letters, an extraordinary expression, where he speaks of the coals of divine wrath all falling upon the head of Christ, so that not one might fall upon his people. "And yet," saith he, "if one of those coals should drop from his head upon mine, and did utterly consume me, yet if I felt it was a part of the coals that fell on him, and I was bearing it for his sake, and in communion with him, I would choose it for my heaven." That is a strong thing to say, that to suffer with Christ would be his heaven, if he assuredly knew that it was for and with Christ that he was suffering. Oh! there is indeed a heavenliness about suffering for Jesus. *His* cross hath such a majesty and mystery of delight in it, that, the more heavy it becometh, the more lightly doth it sit upon the believer's shoulders.

Christ Always New.— To-day, stepping in to see a gentleman, I observed a table which had upon it a great variety of objects. I wondered what they were, and took the liberty of asking him. He told me that he had some beautiful stereoscopic views there which had been taken at an immense expense in Egypt, in the Holy Land, and in all parts of the world; and he showed me one or two Scriptural subjects which very much interested me. They were certainly preeminently excellent as works of art. He said, "There, sir, I never get tired of looking at those things. I could look at them constantly, and never get tired of them." "Well," I said, "I quite understand that; they are excellent; for

really there is the study of half an hour in this one picture; and then one might begin again, it is so full of beauty, and it seems so true to the original." But I thought to myself, "Excellent as they are, I think, if I call to see my friend in a year's time he will tell me that he has had to buy a fresh lot of views, for he has been looking at these so often, that he has become altogether tired of them. They would have no freshness to him, because he had seen them so many times. But mark; the reason why he could look at them so often was because they were so excellent. If they had been bad views, if there had not been great skill and great art bestowed upon them, he would soon have become tired of looking at them. There are some views in nature which a man might look at a hundred times, and yet always wonder at them; but the reason is, because they are so beautiful. There are other things which might strike one's eye at first, but which when they are looked into would lose their freshness, because there would be no real ground for admiration, because there was no excellency. But Christ Jesus will always have the dew of his youth, because he is always so excellent.

"**Bleating of the Sheep.**"— If you learn of Jesus you will have rest from the fear of men. I recollect, before I came to London, being at a prayer-meeting where a very quaint brother prayed for me that I might be delivered from the "bleating of the sheep." I understood it after awhile, he meant that I might live above the fear of man, that when such a person said "How much we have been edified to-day," I might not be puffed up; or if another said, "How dull the discourse was to-day," I might not be depressed. You will be delivered from "the bleating of the sheep" when you have the spirit of the Good Shepherd.

Yoked with Christ.— When bullocks are yoked, there are generally two. I have watched them in Northern Italy, and noticed that when two are yoked together, and they are perfectly agreed, the yoke is always easy to both of them. If one were determined to lie down and the other to stand up, the yoke would be very uncomfortable; but when they are both of one mind you will see them look at each other with those large, lustrous, brown eyes of theirs so lovingly, and with a look they read each other's minds, so that when one wants to lie down, down they go, or when one wishes to go forward, forward they both go, keeping step. In this way the yoke is easy. Now I think the Savior says to us, "I am bearing one end of the yoke on my shoulder; come, my disciple, place your neck under the other side of it, and then learn of me. Keep step with me, be as I am, do as I do. I am meek and lowly in heart; your heart must be like mine, and then we will work together in blessed fellowship, and you will find that working with me is a happy thing; for my yoke is easy to me, and will be to you. Come, then, true yoke-fellow, come and be yoked with me, take my yoke upon you, and learn of me."

Christ Grows on the Growing Christian.— Like the traveler ascending the Alps to reach the summit of Mont Blanc; at first he observes that lord of the hills as one horn among many, and often in the twistings of his upward path he sees other peaks which appear more elevated than that monarch of mountains; but when at last he is near the summit, he sees all the rest of the hills beneath his feet, and like a mighty wedge of alabaster Mount Blanc pierces the very clouds. So, as we grow in grace, other things sink and Jesus rises. They must decrease, but Christ must increase; until he alone fills the full horizon of your soul, and rises clear

and bright and glorious up into the very heaven of God. O that we may thus see "Jesus only!"

Running Into Christ's Arms.— It was a brave saying of Martin Luther's, when he said, "I would run into Christ's arms even if he had a drawn sword in his hand." Now, he has not a drawn sword, but he has his wounds in his hands. Run into his arms, poor sinner. "Oh," you say, "May I come?" How can you ask the question? you are *commanded* to come. The great command of the gospel is, "Believe on the Lord Jesus." Those who disobey this command disobey God. It is as much a command of God that man should believe on Christ, as that we should love our neighbor.

Not Works but Christ.— Remember what that eminent Scotch divine said, when he was dying. Some one said to him, "What are you doing now?" Said he, "I am just gathering all my good works up together, and I am throwing them all overboard; and I am lashing myself to the plank of free grace, and I hope to swim to glory on it." So do you do; every day keep your eye only on Christ; and so long as your eye is single, your whole body must and shall be full of light. But if you once look crosseyed, first to yourself and then to Christ, your whole body shall be full of darkness.

A True Friend.— Young lady, you speak of a dear friend whom you acquired last night in a ball-room. Do not, I beseech you, misuse the word; he is not a friend if he was acquired merely there; friends are better things than those which grow in the hot-house of pleasure. Friendship is a more lasting plant than those. You have a friend, have you? Yes; and he keeps a pair of horses, and has a good establishment. Ah! but your best way to prove your friend is to know that he will be your friend when you have not so much as a mean

cottage, and when, houseless and without clothing, you are driven to beg your bread. Thus you would make true proof of a friend. Give me a friend who was born in the winter time, whose cradle was rocked in the storm; he will last. Our fair weather friends shall flee away from us. I had rather have a robin for a friend than a swallow; for a swallow abides with us only in the summer time, but a robin cometh to us in the winter. Those are tight friends that will come the nearest to us when we are in the most distress; but those are not friends who speed themselves away when ill times come. Believer, hast thou reason to fear that Christ will leave you now? Has he not been with you in the house of mourning? You found your friend where men find pearls, "in caverns deep, where darkness dwells;" you found Jesus in your hour of trouble. It was on the bed of sickness that you first learned the value of his name; it was in the hour of mental anguish that you first did lay hold of the hem of his garment; and since then, your nearest and sweetest intercourse has been held with him in the hours of darkness.

The Elder Brother.— It is saying a great thing to affirm that "there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother;" for the love of brotherhood has produced most valiant deeds. We have read stories of what brotherhood could do, which, we think, could hardly be excelled in the annals of friendship. Timoleon, with his shield, stood over the body of his slain brother, to defend him from the insults of the foe. It was reckoned a brave deed of brotherhood that he should dare the spears of an army in defense of his brother's corpse. And many such instances have there been, in ancient and modern warfare, of the attachment of brethren. There is a story told of a Highland regiment, who, while marching through the Highlands, lost their way; they

were overtaken by one of the terrible storms which will sometimes come upon travelers unawares, and blinded by the snow, they lost their way upon the mountains. Well nigh frozen to death, it was with difficulty they could continue their march. One man after another dropped into the snow and disappeared. There were two brothers, however, of the name of Forsythe; one of them fell prostrate on the earth, and would have lain there to die, but his brother, tho barely able to drag his own limbs across the white desert, took him on his back, and carried him along, and as others fell, one by one, this brave, true-hearted brother carried his loved on his back until at last he himself fell down overcome with fatigue, and died. His brother, however, had received such warmth from his body that he was enabled to reach the end of his journey in safety, and so lived. Here we have an instance of one brother sacrificing his life for another. I hope there are some brothers here who would be prepared to do the same if they should ever be brought into the same difficulty. It is saying a great thing, to declare that "there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."

Christ's Tender Care.— A queer thing I once read in an old book about God's children and people being a part of Christ and in union with him. The writer says — "A father sitteth in his room, and there cometh in a stranger: the stranger taketh up a child on his knee, and the child hath a sore finger: so he saith, 'My child, you have a sore finger;' 'Yes!' 'Well, let me take it off, and give thee a golden one!' The child looketh at him and saith, 'I will not go to that man any more, for he talks of taking off my finger: I love my own finger, and I will not have a golden one instead of it.' So the saint saith, 'I am one of the members of Christ, but

I am like a sore finger, and he will take me off and put a golden one on.' 'No,' said Christ, 'No, no; I can not have any of my members taken away; if the finger be a sore one, I will bind it up; I will strengthen it.'"

The Savior.— I had a friend, who, standing by the side of a piece of frozen water, saw a young lad in it, and sprang upon the ice in order to save him. After clutching the boy, he held him in his hands and cried out, "Here he is! Here he is! I have saved him." But, just as they caught hold of the boy, he sank himself, and his body was not found for some time afterwards, when he was quite dead. Oh! it is so with Jesus. My soul was drowning. From heaven's high portals he saw me sinking in the depths of hell; he, in his supreme mercy, plunged in:

> "He SANK beneath his heavy woes,
> To raise me to a crown;
> There's ne'er a gift his hand bestows,
> But cost his heart a groan."

Ah! we may indeed regret our sin, since it slew Jesus.

Christ Seeking After Sinners.— A friend of mine, who has been a clergyman in Ireland related it to me himself as a veritable narrative. A clergyman of an Irish parish said, that "he went round to visit all his parishioners, but," said he, "there was one poor woman in the parish who had been an abandoned character, and I dared not go to visit her, because I thought it would ill become my position, so I passed by. Ah! brother," he said, "I know it was an evil pride, or else I should have gone after the chief of sinners, for the care of her soul was in some measure committed to my hands." One day he saw her in church, and he thought he heard her repeating the responses, and fancied he saw the

tears rolling down her cheek. O how his bowels yearned for her soul! He longed to speak with her, but he dared not. She came there month after month, a constant worshiper, and yet he passed by her door and did not visit her. At last one day she came to the door, and said, "Sir, I want you;" he then went in, and she put out her hand, and taking hold of his, said, "O, sir! if *your Master* had been in this village half as long as you have, I am sure he would have been to see me, for I am the worst sinner in the parish, and therefore I want his help the most; but tho *you* have not been to see me, I know who has said: 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.'"

Christ Pulling at Our Hearts.— Remember that pretty parable given by one of our ministers, of the boy's kite. He made it fly aloft: it rose up so high that he could no longer see it. Still he said he had a kite, and he held fast by it. "Boy, how do you know you have a kite?" "I can feel it pull," said he. This morning we feel our Jesus pull. He draws us with a far greater force than a mere string. He is gone into heaven, and he draws us after him. O Lord, draw us with greater power than ever.

Christ a Victor.— I know of no better theme to stir the pulses of my soul with holy exultation than the thought that Jesus is victor. I have heard of wounded men crushed amid a heap of bleeding bodies lying on the battle-field, and rousing all the life that remained in them when they saw the great Napoleon come riding over the plain. With their legs gone, they raised themselves upon their arms once more to salute their captain. Poor souls! to be thus enthusiastic for one who shed their blood like water; far more wise is our enthusiasm for him who shed his blood for us. If I knew that I

must die in a ditch, and be forgotten or slandered and abhorred of men, I would yet rejoice and cry "Hosanna" at the prospect of my Lord's sure victory. Yea I will salute him now with my most hearty praises, and be glad, because I know that he is even now King of kings and Lord of lords. Hallelujah! He of whom they said, "Crucify him, crucify him," is now head over all.

Christ Ever the Same.— Men in the days of Toplady looked back to the days of Whitfield; men in the days of Whitfield looked back to the days of Bunyan; men in the days of Bunyan wept because of the days of Wycliffe, and Calvin, and Luther; and men then wept for the days of Augustine and Chrysostom. Men in those days wept for the days of the Apostles; and doubtless men in the days of the Apostles wept for the days of Jesus Christ; and no doubt some in the days of Jesus Christ were so blind as to wish to return to the days of prophecy, and though more of the days of Elijah than they did of the most glorious day of Christ. Some men look more to the past than the present. Rest assured, that Jesus Christ is the same to-day as he was yesterday, and he will be the same for ever.

Christ Seeking the Lost.— "I am lost," said Mr. Whitefield's brother to the Countess of Huntington. "I am delighted to hear it," said the Countess. "Oh," cried he, "what a dreadful thing to say!" "Nay," said she, "'for the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost;' therefore I know he is come to save *you.*" O sinner, it would be unreasonable to despair. The more broken thou art, the more ruined thou art, the more vile thou art in thine own esteem, so much the more room is there for the display of infinite mercy and power.

The Humiliation of Christ.— Never was there a poorer man than Christ; he was the prince of poverty. He was the reverse of Crœsus — *he* might be on the top of the hill of riches, *Christ* stood in the lowest vale of poverty. Look at his dress, it is woven from the top throughout, the garment of the poor! As for his food, he oftentimes did hunger; and always was dependent upon the charity of others for the relief of his wants! He who scattered the harvest o'er the broad acres of the world, had not sometimes wherewithal to stay the pangs of hunger? He who digged the springs of the ocean, sat upon a well and said to a Samaritan woman, "Give me to drink!" He rode in no chariot, he walked his weary way, foot sore, o'er the flints of Galilee! He had not where to lay his head. He looked upon the fox as it hurried to its burrow, and the fowl as it went to its resting-place, and he said, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but I, the Son of man, have not where to lay my head." He who had once been waited on by angels, becomes the servant of servants, takes a towel, girds himself, and washes his disciples' feet! He who was once honored with the hallelujahs of ages, is now spit upon and despised! He who was loved by his Father, and had abundance of the wealth of affection, could say, "He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me." Oh, for words to picture the humiliation of Christ!

No Caste to Christ.— I recollect in Martin Luther's life that he saw, in one of the Romish churches, a picture of the Pope, and the cardinals, and bishops, and priests, and monks, and friars, all on board a ship. They were all safe, every one of them. As for the laity, poor wretches, they were struggling in the sea, and many of them drowning. Only those were saved to whom the good men in the ship were so kind as to hand out a

rope or a plank. That is not our Lord's teaching: his blood is shed "for many," and not for the few. He is not the Christ of a caste, or a class, but the Christ of all conditions of men.

Christ Our Only Resting-Place.— I spoke to a friend this week who is sore sick, and I said, "You are resting in Christ, my brother," He replied, "I have nothing else to rest in." I said, "Your hope is in the atoning sacrifice of Christ," and he answered, "What other hope could I have?" While we have fifty ways of salvation we shall be lost; but when we see that "other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, even Jesus Christ the righteous," then we shall build upon it and be safe.

Christ the True Physician.— Have you been to Doctor Ceremony? He is, at this time, the fashionable doctor. Has he told you that you must attend to forms and rules? Has he prescribed you so many prayers, and so many services? Ah! many go to him, and they persevere in a round of religious observances, but these yield no lasting ease to the conscience. Have you tried Doctor Morality? He has a large practice, and is a fine old Jewish physician. "Be good in outward character," says he, "and it will work inwardly, and cleanse the heart!" A great many persons are supposed to have been cured by him and by his assistant, Doctor Civility, who is nearly as clever as his master: but I have it on good evidence that neither of them apart, nor even the two together, could ever deal with an inward disease. Do what you may, your own doings will not stanch the wounds of a bleeding heart. Doctor Mortification has also a select practice; but men are not saved by denying themselves until they first deny their self-righteousness. Doctor Excitement has many patients, but his cures seldom outlive the set of sun. Doctor Feeling is much

sought after by tender spirits; these try to feel sorrow and remorse; but, indeed, the way of cure does not lie in that quarter. Let everything be done that can be done apart from our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, and the sick soul will be nothing bettered. You may try human remedies for the space of a lifetime, but sin will remain in power, guilt will cling to the conscience, and the heart will abide as hard as ever.

Jesus Belongs to All Humanity.— I admire the Welch sister who was of opinion that the Lord Jesus must be Welch. When they asked her how she proved it, she said that he always spoke to her heart in Welch. Doubtless it was so, and I can, with equal warmth, declare that he always speaks to me in English. Brethren from Germany, France, Sweden, Italy — you all claim that he speaks to you in your own tongue.

Christ's Joy in Soul-Saving.— Some of you have been salmon fishing in the Scotch rivers; you have fished on and on until you have hooked a huge fish, and by the time you have landed him, on taking out your watch, you discover that it is long past your dinner hour, and you are surprised that you had not noticed that you were almost faint. Your excitement kept you going: only when it was over did you begin to hunger. Thus the Master was so taken up with soul-saving that he had meat to eat that others knew not of.

Christ's Ownership in His People.— If I possess a love-token that some dear one has given me, I may rightly desire to have it with me. Nobody can have such a right to your wedding-ring, good sister, as you have yourself; and are not Christ's saints, as it were, a signet upon his finger, a token which his Father gave him of his good pleasure in him? Should they not be with Jesus where he is, since they are his crown jewels and his glory? We in our creature love lift up our hands

and cry, "My Lord, my Master, let me have this dear one with me a little longer. I need the companionship of one so sweet, or life will be misery to me." But if Jesus looks us in the face, and says, "Is thy right better than mine?" we draw back at once. He has a greater part in his saints than we can have.

Christ the Outcast's Savior.— One said to me the other day, talking of her sin, and of her repentance, "Yet, sir, I am an outcast." That word pierced my heart like a dagger. I said, "Yes, but the Church of Christ was made on purpose to be a home for outcasts: here is a new household for you, new brothers and sisters for you, a new future for you; for now you are one of the solitary ones whom the Lord in His infinite wisdom, will set in families."

Overpowering Love of Christ.— "They shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it." The words are true to the letter. Take a case: Peter went a fishing; and if he had caught a few fish, his boat would have floated high on the lake; but when the Master came into the boat and told him where to throw the net so that he pulled up a multitude of fish, then the little barque began to sink. Down, down, it went, and poor Peter went down with it, till he fell at Jesus' feet and cried, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." He was confused and overwhelmed, or he would never have asked the blessed Master to leave him: Christ's goodness had fairly beaten him till he was afraid of his Benefactor. Know ye not what it is to be weighted down with infinite goodness, oppressed with mercy, swept away by an avalanche of love. I, at least, know what it means, and I know of no experience which has made me so little in mine own eyes.

Christ as Engraver.— I was surprised when I was told, the other day, by a friend, who was a maker of steel-plate engravings, how much of labor had to be put into a finely-executed engraving. Think of the power that has cut lines of beauty in such steel as we are! Think of the patience that lent its arm, and its eye, and its heart, and its infinite mind, to the carrying on of the supreme work of producing the image of Christ in those who were born in sin! Think of the skill which makes heirs of God out of heirs of wrath!

The Lost Child.— If you have ever been in a house with a mother and father, and daughters and sons, when a little child has been lost, you will never forget the agitation of each member of the household. See the father as he goes to the police-station, and calls at every likely house, for he must find his child or break his heart. See the deep oppression and bitter anguish of the mother; she is like one distracted till she has news of her darling. You now begin to understand what Jesus feels for one whom he loves, who is graven on the palms of his hands, whom he looked upon in the glass of his foreknowledge, when he was bleeding his life away upon the tree; he hath no rest in his spirit till his beloved is found. He hath compassion like a God, and that doth transcend all the compassion of parents or of brothers, — the compassion of an infinite heart brimming over with an ocean of love. This one thought moves the pity of the Lord — "if he lose one of them."

The Seeking Shepherd.— A son is taken ill far away from home. He is laid sick with a fever, and a telegram is sent home. His mother says she *must* go and nurse him; she is wretched till she can set out upon the journey. It is a dreary place where her boy lies, but for the moment it is the dearest spot on earth to her. She joys to leave the comforts of her home to tarry

among strangers for the love of her boy. She feels an intense joy in sacrificing herself; she refuses to retire from the bedside, she will not leave her charge; she watches day and night, and only from utter exhaustion does she fall asleep. You could not have kept her in England, she would have been too wretched. It was a great, deep, solemn pleasure for her to be where she could minister to her own beloved. Soul, remember you have given Jesus great joy in his saving you. He was forever with the Father, eternally happy, infinitely glorious, as God over all; but yet he must needs come hither out of boundless love, take upon himself our nature, and suffer in our stead to bring us back to holiness and God. "He layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing." That day the shepherd knew but one joy. He had found his sheep, and the very pressure of it upon his shoulders made his heart light, for he knew by that sign that the object of his care was safe beyond all question.

The True Shepherd.— "The sheep follow him, for they know his voice; and a stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers." I remember hearing a brother tell how he disproved the notion that sheep only know the shepherd by his dress. When in Palestine he asked a shepherd to allow him to put on his clothes. Then he began to call the sheep, but never a one would come, not even a lamb. The most sheepish of the flock had sense enough left to know that he was not the shepherd, and even the youngest kept aloof, heedless of the stranger's voice. He might have called till he was hoarse, but they would not come. So God's people know their Lord, and they know the kind of food which he gives them.

Christ the Plant of Renown.— Did you ever hear the legend of a man whose garden produced nothing else but weeds, till at last he met with a strange foreign flower

of singular vitality. The story is that he sowed a handful of this seed in his overgrown garden, and left it to work its own sweet way. He slept and rose, and knew not how the seed was growing till on a day he opened the gate and saw a sight which much astounded him. He knew that the seed would produce a dainty flower and he looked for it; but he had little dreamed that the plant would cover the whole garden. So it was: the flower had exterminated every weed, till as he looked from one end to the other from wall to wall he could see nothing but the fair colors of that rare plant, and smell nothing but its delicious perfume. Christ is that plant of renown. If he be sown in the soil of your soul, he will gradually eat out the roots of all ill weeds and poisonous plants, till over all your nature there shall be Christ in you.

Christ as King.— Christ in us is *Christ reigning.* It reminds me of Mr. Bunyan's picture of Mansoul, when the Prince Immanuel laid siege to it, and Diabolus from within the city strove to keep him out. It was a hard time for Mansoul then; but when at last the battering rams had broken down the gates, and the silver trumpets sounded, and the prince's captains entered the breach, then on a day the prince himself did ride down the city's streets, while liberated citizens welcomed him with all their hearts, hung out all their streamers, and made the church towers rock again as the bells rang out merry peals, for the king himself was come. Up to the castle of the heart he rode in triumph, and took his royal throne to be henceforth the sole lord and king of the city. Christ in you is a right royal word. Christ swaying his scepter from the center of your being over every power and faculty, desire and resolve, bringing every thought into captivity to himself; oh, this is glory begun, and the sure pledge of heaven. Oh for more

of the imperial sovereignty of Jesus; it is our liberty to be absolutely under his sway.

Christ the Sinner's Only Physician.— Suppose that a man has heard of a great physician who understands his complaint. He has travelled a great many miles to see this celebrated doctor; but when he gets to the door they tell him that he is out. "Well," says he, "then I must wait till he is in." "You need not wait," they reply, "his assistant is at home." The suffering man, who has been often disappointed, answers, "I do not care about his assistant, I want to see the man himself: mine is a desperate case, but I have heard that this physician has cured the like; I must, therefore, see *him*. No assistants for me." "Well," say they, "he is out; but there are his books; you can see his books." "Thank you," he says, "I cannot be content with his books, I want the living man and nothing less. It is to him that I must speak, and from him I will receive instructions." "Do you see that cabinet?" "Yes." "It is full of his medicines." The sick man answers, "I dare say they are very good, but they are of no use to me without the doctor: I want their owner to prescribe for me, or I shall die of my disease." "But see," cries one, "here is a person who has been cured by him, a man of great experience, who has been present at many remarkable operations. Go into the inquiry-room with him, and he will tell you all about the mode of cure." The afflicted man answers, "I am much obliged to you, but all your talk only makes me long the more to see the doctor. I came to see *him*, and I am not going to be put off with anything else. I must see the man himself, for myself. He has made my disease a specialty; he knows how to handle my case, and I will stop till I see *him*."

Now, dear friends, if you are seeking Christ, imitate

this sick man, or else you may be sure you will miss the mark altogether.

Christ Inspires Enthusiasm.— When great commanders are known to have come into a camp what a thrill of joy it causes among their trusty warriors. When the soldiers have been much dejected it has been whispered in their tents —

> "The king has come to marshal us,
> All in his armor dressed,"

and from that moment every man has cheered up. At the sight of the king as he comes riding into the camp the host raises a great shout. What means it? It is a shout of loyal love — they are glad to welcome their leader. So is it with us when we sing —

> "The King himself comes near,"

we are all as glad as glad can be. Those who cannot come out to see their prince, because they are lying on their sick beds in hospital, clap their hands, while even the little children in their mothers' arms join in the general joy. "The king is come," say they, and his presence kindles their enthusiasm till they make the hills ring again. You know how the stern Ironsides felt when Cromwell came along; every man was a hero when he led the way. They were ready for any adventure, no matter how difficult, as long as their great chief was there. That enthusiasm which was inspired by Alexander, and by Napoleon, and by other great commanders, is the earthly image of the spiritual fervor felt by the church when the Lord Jesus vouchsafes to be in the midst of it.

Christ's Delight in His People.— When Cyrus took the Greek ambassador through his garden, he challenged him to admire its charms. The Spartan approved all

he saw, but still his admiration was cool and critical. "This garden," said its master, "yields me more pleasure and satisfaction than you can imagine or I can express." "And why?" asked the visitor. "Because," replied Cyrus, "I planted every tree in it myself. I planned all the paths, and all the flowers have I reared. No hand but mine has dug the soil, tended the plants, pruned the trees, or done aught beside but my own." His toil and his trouble thus endeared the place to the king. So, truly, Christ can say when he looks upon his people, "There is a fruitful bough there: I pruned that. He was sick, long laid aside from business, he feared his family would be starved: I was pruning him then; but I love the fruit that is on him because I know how it came there. That plant yonder which is blooming now and shedding such a sweet perfume of love, well do I recollect when it was drooping and ready to die. I came and watered it. She, timid disciple, would say, 'Blessed be the gentle hand that shed the dew and poured nourishment on my poor, parched, and withered root!" Yes, the Savior gives us "grace for grace" that we may produce grace. I leave the thought with you for meditation, and the issues for your edification, only praying earnestly that his Holy Spirit may work in you "grace for grace."

Christ Sufficient for All Kinds of Sinners.— A worthy, consistent, industrious woman was married to a low, worthless, dissipated husband. Both of them, however, were alike ignorant of the gospel. They came together to the house of prayer; they heard together the tidings of mercy; they each believed, and each of them received the Savior, and they both were saved the same way; they both found mercy on the same terms. To the rich, free, sovereign grace of God they vied with one another in ascribing the praise.

Christ as a Ferry-Man.— A negro was once sent by his master on an errand that did not suit him; he did not want to go. So when he came to a river he turned back, and said, "Master, I came to a river, and I could not swim across it." "Well, but was there not a ferry-boat?" "Yes, there was a ferry-boat, but the man was on the other side." "Well," said the master, "did you call to the ferry-man to come and take you across?" No, he did not think of doing that, for, as he did not wish to go over, he was glad to find an excuse. Now, it is true, sinner, that you cannot save yourself, but there is One who can. There is a ferry-boat and there is a Ferry-man. Cry to him! Cry to him,— "Master, across this river be pleased to take me; I cannot swim it, but thou canst bear me over it. Oh! do for me what I cannot do for myself! Make me to be accepted in the Beloved!" If you seek the Lord he will be found of you.

Christ the Door.— I read a story the other day of some Russians crossing wide plains studded over here and there with forests. The villages were ten or a dozen miles from each other, the wolves were out, the horses were rushing forward madly, the travelers could hear the baying of the wolves behind them; and, tho the horses tore along with all speed, yet the wolves were fast behind, and they only escaped, as we say, "by the skin of their teeth," managing just to get inside some hut that stood in the road, and to shut-to the door. Then they could hear the wolves leap on the roof; they could hear them dash against the sides of the hut; they could hear them gnawing at the door, and howling, and making all sorts of dismal noises; but the travelers were safe, because they had entered in by the door, and the door was shut. Now, when a man is in Christ, he can hear, as it were, the devils howling like wolves, all fierce and hungry for him; and his own sins, like wolves,

are seeking to drag him down to destruction. But he has got in to Christ, and that is such a shelter that all the devils in the world, if they were to come at once, could not start a single beam of that eternal refuge: it must stand fast, tho the earth and heaven should pass away. Now, to every man and woman Christ says that if they have entered in by the door, they shall be saved.

Suffering for Christ.— There was a certain king whose son was sent upon an errand to a far country, and when he came into that country, altho he was the lawful prince of it, he found that the citizens would not acknowledge him. They mocked at him, jested at him, and took him and set him in the pillory, and there they scoffed at him and pelted him with filth. Now, there was one in that country who knew the prince, and he alone stood up for him when all the mob was in tumult raging against him. And when they set him on high as an object of scorn, this man stood side by side with him to wipe the filth from that dear royal face; and when from cruel hands missiles in scorn were thrown, this man took his full share; and whenever he could he thrust himself before the prince to ward off the blows from him if possible, and to bear the scorn instead of him. Now it came to pass that after awhile the prince went on his way, and in due season the man who had been the prince's friend was called to the king's palace. And on a day when all the princes of the court were round about, and the peers and nobles of the land were sitting in their places, the king came to his throne and he called for that man, and he said, "Make way, princes and nobles! Make way! Here is a man more noble than you all, for he stood boldly forth with my son when he was scorned and scoffed at! Make way, I say, each one of you, for he shall sit at my right hand with my own son. As he

took a share of his scorn, he shall now take a share of his honor." And there sat princes and nobles who wished that they had been there, ay! envied the man who had been privileged to endure scorn and scoffing for the prince's sake! You need not that I interpret the parable. May you make angels envious of you, if envy can ever pierce their holy minds. You can submit for Christ's sake to sufferings which it is not possible for seraphim or cherubim to endure.

Christ the Root.— I like that story of the Sandwich Islanders who had been converted through some of our missionaries, and the Gospel had been preached to them for years. At last, two or three gentlemen in long black gowns landed there, and the people asked them what they had come for. They said they were come to instruct them in the true faith, and to teach them. Well, they said, they should be glad to hear it. If their teaching was true, and like the Scriptures, they would listen to them. By and by, a little diagram was exhibited to the natives after the similitude of a tree. This tree had many branches. The twigs which were farthest off were the different saints, the believers, those who do good works; then the limbs, which were a little larger, were the priests; the bigger boughs were bishops; the biggest boughs were the cardinals; and, at last, these all joined on to the trunk, which was the Pope, and that went all the way down to the bottom, till it came to Peter, who was the root, deriving his authority immediately from Christ. So the natives asked about all these twigs, and branches, and specially about certain rotten branches that were tumbling off into a fire. What were they? They were Luther, and Calvin, and other heretics who had been cut off from the true tree of the church. "Well," said one of the islanders, "and pray what is the root of the tree?" Of course, that was allowed to

be Jesus Christ. So they clapped their hands at once for joy, and said, "Never mind about the branches, and stems, and twigs; we have never heard of them, but we have got the root, and that will do to grow on." In like manner, brethren, we can say to-night, if we have got Christ, we have got "the root out of the dry ground." We have got the root of the matter, the basis, the sum, the substance of it.

> "Let others trust what forms they please,
> Their hopes we'll not contest."

Christ Grows on His Disciples.— So, when we were carnal, and did not know King Jesus, we esteemed him to be very much like anybody else, but now we begin to know him, we find out that he is much greater, infinitely greater than we thought he was. And as we grow in grace, we find him to be more glorious still. A little star to our view at first, he has grown in our estimation into a sun now, a blazing sun, by whose beams our soul is refreshed. Ah! but when we get near to him, what will he be? Imagine yourself borne up on an angel's wing to take a journey to a star. Traveling at an inconceivable rate you open your eyes on a sudden and say — "How wonderful! Why, that which was a star just now has become as large to my vision, as the sun at noon-day." "Stop," says the angel; "you shall see greater things than these," and, as you speed on, the disc of that orb increases, till it is equal to a hundred suns; and now you say, "But what?" Am I not near it now?" "No," says the angel, "that enormous globe is still far, far away," and when you come to it, you would find it to be such a wondrous world, that arithmetic could not compute its size; scarcely could imagination belt it with the zone of fancy. Now, such is Jesus Christ. I said he grows upon his people here, but what must

it be to see him there, where the veil is lifted, and we behold him face to face?

Christ the Pole Star.— There are some of the stars that are extremely useful to sailors. I scarcely know how else the great wide sea would be navigated, especially if it were not for the Polar Star. Jesus is the Polar Star to us. How the poor negro in the olden times, when the curse of slavery had not been taken away, must have blessed God for that pole star — so easy to find out. Any child with but a moment's teaching will soon know how to discover it in the midst of its fellows at night, and when the negro had once learned to distinguish the star that shone over the land of freedom, how he followed it through the great dismal swamps, or along the plains which were more dreadful still; how he could ford the streams, and climb the mountains, always cheered by the sight of that pole star. Such is Jesus Christ to the seeker. He leads to liberty; he conducts to peace. Oh! I wish you would follow him, some of you who are going about a thousand ways to find peace where you will never find it. There is never a Sunday but I try to speak, sometimes in gentler tones, and at other seasons with thundering notes, the simple truth that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. I do try to make it plain to you that it is not your prayers and tears, your doings, your willings, your anything, that can save you, but that all your help is laid upon one that is mighty, and that you must look alone to him. Yet, sinners, you are still looking to yourselves. You rake the dung hills of your human nature to find the pearl of great price which is not there. You will look beneath the ice of your natural depravity to find the flame of comfort which is not there. You might as well seek in hell itself to find heaven as look to your own works and merits to find some ground of trust. Down with them! Down

with them, every one of them! Away with all these confidences of yours, for

> "None but Jesus, none but Jesus,
> Can do helpless sinners good."

Just reverse that helm; and shift that sail, and tack about! Follow not the wrecker's beacon on yonder shore luring you to the rocks of self-delusion, but where that pole star guides, thither let your vessel drift, and pray for the favoring gales of the blessed Spirit to guide you rightly to the port of peace.

Christ Our Banner.— The banner was ever a source of consolation to the wounded. There he lies, the good knight; right well has he fought without fear and without reproach; but a chance arrow pierced the joints of his harness, and his life is oozing out from the ghastly wound. There is no one there to unbuckle his helmet or give him a draught of cooling water; his frame is locked up in that hard case of steel, and tho he feels the smart he cannot gain the remedy, He hears the cries, the mingled cries, the hoarse shouts of men that rush in fury against their fellows: and he opens his eyes — as yet he has not fainted with his bleeding. Where, think you, does he look? He turns himself round. What is he looking for? For friend? For comrade? No. Should they come to him he would say, "Just lift me up, and let me sit against that tree awhile, and bleed here; but go you to the fight." Where, where is that restless eye searching, and what is the object for which it is looking? Yes, he has it; and the face of the dying man is brightened. He sees the banner still waving, and with his last breath he cries, "On! on! on!" and falls asleep content, because the banner is safe. It has not been cast down. Tho he has fallen, yet the banner is secure. Even so every true soldier of the cross rejoices in

its triumph. We fall, but Christ does not. We die, but the cause prospers. As I have told you before, when my heart was most sad — sad as it never was before nor since — that sweet text, "Him hath God the Father exalted, and given him a name that is above every name," quite cheered my soul, and set me again in peace and comfort.

Christ the Center of Attack.— Whenever the old Knights of the Red Cross fought the Saracens they always endeavored to make their steel ring upon the helmet of men whose hand held the crescent, the standard of Mohammed; ever the fight was bloodiest around the standard. Sometimes, when the battle was over, if you walked the field you would see it strewn with legs and arms and mangled bodies everywhere. In one place there would be a heap where they were piled one upon another, a great mountain of flesh and armor, broken bones and smashed skulls, and you would ask, "What is this? How came they here? How trampled they so one upon another, and fought in pools of human blood?" The answer would be, "'Twas there the standard-bearer stood, and first the adversary made a dash and stole the banner, and then fifty knights vowed to redeem it, and they dashed against their foes and took it by storm, and then again hand to hand they fought with the banner between them, first in one hand and then in another, changing ownership each hour. Well, dear friends, we must remember that Christ Jesus has always been the object of attack.

Christ our Guide.— When Mr. Andrew Fuller was going to preach before an association, he rode to the meeting on his horse. There had been a good deal of rain, and the rivers were very much swollen. He got to one river which he had to cross. He looked at it, and he was half afraid of the strong current, as he did not know the

depth. A farmer, who happened to be standing by, said —"It is all right, Mr. Fuller; you will get through it all right, sir; the horse will keep its feet." Mr. Fuller went in, and the water got up to the girth, and then up to the saddle, and he began to get uncomfortably wet. Mr. Fuller thought he had better turn round, and he was going to do so, when the same farmer shouted — "Go on, Mr. Fuller; go on; I know it is all right;" and Mr. Fuller said, "Then I will go on; I will go by faith." Now, sinner, it is very like that with you. You think that your sins are too deep, that Christ will never be able to carry you over them; but, I say to you — It is all right, sinner; trust Jesus, and he will carry you thro hell itself, if it were needful and possible. If you had all the sins of all the men that have ever lived, and they were all yours, if you could trust him, Jesus Christ would carry you through the current of all that sin. It is all right, man! Only trust Christ. The river may be deep, but Christ's love is deeper still. It is all right, man! Do not let the devil make you doubt my Lord and Master. He is a liar from the beginning, and the father of lies, but my Master is faithful and true. Rest on him and it is all right. Herein lies the supreme consolation of this earthly life.

Loyalty to Christ.— Dr. Payson had once been out to tea with one of his people, who had been particularly hospitable to him, and when he was going, the doctor said:— "Well, now, Madam, you have treated me exceedingly well, but how do you treat my Master?" That is a question I should like to put to some of you. How do you treat my Master? Why, you treat him as if he were not Christ, as if you did not want him. But, you do need him. May you find him soon, for when you come to die, you will want him then, and perhaps then you may not find him.

Christ Trustworthy.— There came to me the other day a young man who wished to speak with me about his soul troubles, and he began thus, "Dear sir, I cannot trust Christ." To which I answered, "Have you found out something fresh in his character? Has he ceased to be trustworthy? Pray let me know all about it, for it is a serious matter to me: I have trusted him with everything I have for time and for eternity, and if he is not fit to be trusted I am in a terrible case." He looked at me, and he said, "I will not say that again, sir; I see I have made a mistake. Truly the Lord Jesus is in every way trustworthy." "Well, then," I said, "Why cannot you trust him?" I left him with that unanswerable question. A man is certainly able to trust one whom he regards as trustworthy. My young friend saw that at once, and asked me further: "But may I trust Christ to save me? Am I permitted to trust my soul with him?" I said to him, "Is not this the command of the gospel: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved? And are you not warned that if you do not believe in him you will be damned? How can we doubt that we are permitted to do that which is commanded us of the Lord? I am to preach the gospel to every creature, and this is the gospel:—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!" He said, "So, then, if I trust Christ, he will save me?" and I replied, "Certainly he will; he is the Savior of all them that put their trust in him. He says, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' It is written, 'He that believeth on him hath everlasting life;' he that trusts in Jesus is saved." He thanked me, and saying that he had found out the secret, he went on his way rejoicing. I told him the gospel; he received it; and he entered into rest.

Christ Bringing Men Back.— Ah! we cannot always tell when we are driving poor souls away from Christ. Often, when we think we are wooing we are driving them away; when we would be winning to the Savior, some harsh expression of ours frightens sinners away from him. Ah! poor soul, hast thou been driven away? Dost thou understand and sympathize with what I have said? Before I knew the Lord, I could declare that I was driven away. Once, under a powerful sermon, my heart shook within me, and was dissolved in the midst of my bowels; I thought I would seek the Lord, and I bowed my knee and wrestled, and poured out my heart before him. I ventured within his sanctuary to hear his word, hoping that in some favored hour he would send a precious promise to my consolation; but, ah! that wretched afternoon I heard a sermon wherein Christ was not; I had no longer any hope. I would have sipped at that fountain, but I was driven away; I felt that I would have believed in Christ, and I longed and sighed for him. But, ah! that dreadful sermon and those dreadful things that were uttered; my poor soul knew not what was truth, or what was error; but I thought the man was surely preaching the truth, and I was driven back. I dared not go, I could not believe, I could not lay hold on Christ; I was shut out, if no one else was. Is there some one here who has been driven away? I may have done it, and I will weep before God in secret on account of it. But let me cheer you. Hear this: "I will bring again that which was driven away." As surely as you ever did come once you will be brought back again; that heavenly hour shall once more return; that blessed day shall dawn afresh; Christ shall appear, and his love and mercy shall be bestowed on you. He has drawn you once and he will draw you again, for God never fails. He may, for wise ends and purposes, suf-

fer you to be driven away once; but he will ultimately bring you to himself, for he has said, "I will bring again that which was driven away."

Immediate Healing.— We love the physician who heals speedily. If you find a skillful physician who can heal you of a sad disease even in years, you go to him, and are thankful. But suppose some wondrous man who with a touch could heal you, who with the very glance of his eyes could make you well at once, and stanch that blood or stop that disease, or turn aside that evil thing and make you well, would you not go to him, and feel that he was a great physician indeed? So with Christ. There shall be a man standing there with all his sins upon his head, and he may yet go down these stairs just, complete in Christ, without a sin, freed from its damning power, delivered from all his guilt and iniquity, in one single instant! It is a marvelous thing, beyond our power and comprehension. It is done in an instant. God stamps it; the man is pardoned. He goes away in that same instant justified, as the publican did when he said, "Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner," and received the mercy for which he sued.

Christ the Only Ark of Safety.— Some animals, like the camelopard, whose heads are higher than other animals, might have to bow their necks to go in by the same entrance as the waddling ducks, who naturally stoop, even as they enter a barn; and so, some of the lofty ones of this world must bend down their stiff necks, and bow their proud heads, if they would enter into the church by Christ. Thus, again, the swift horse and the slow-paced snail must enter by one door; so, too, the scribes and pharisees must come in the same way as the publicans and harlots, or be for ever excluded.

All the beasts God had chosen went in by the one door and if any had stood without, and said, "We shall not

come in that way," they would have been standing without till the flood overtook and destroyed them; for there was only one door. There is only one way of salvation, and there is only one means of getting into it. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," but "he that believeth not," whoever he be, must "be damned." There is no hope of any other way of salvation. He that cometh in by the door shall be saved; and Jesus saith, "I am the door."

CHRISTIANS

Prosperity Dangerous.— Ships never strike on rocks out in the great deeps. Children, perhaps, may fancy that a shallow sea is the safest, but an old sailor knows better. While he is off the Irish coast the captain has to keep a good look out, but while he is crossing the Atlantic he is in far less danger. There he has plenty of sea-room, and there is no fear of quicksands or of shoals. When the sailor enters the Thames he encounters first one sand bank and then another, and he is in danger, but out in the deep water, where he finds no bottom, he is but little afraid. So, mark you, in the judgments of God. When he is dealing out affliction to us it is the safest possible sailing that a Christian can have. "What," says one, "trial safe?" Yes, very safe. The safest part of a Christain's life is the time of his trial. "What, when a man is down do you say he is safe?" Yes, for then he need fear no fall; when he is low he need fear no pride; when he is humbled under God's hand then he is less likely to be carried away with every wind of temptation. Smooth water on the way to heaven is always a sign that the soul should keep wide awake, for danger is near. One comes at last to feel a solemn dread creeping over one in times of prosperity. "Thou shalt fear and tremble because of all the good that God

shall make to pass before thee," fearing not so much lest the good should depart as lest we should make an ill use of it, and should have a canker of sloth, or self-confidence, or worldliness growing up in our spirits. We have seen many professed Christians make shipwreck, in some few instances it has been attributable to overwhelming sorrow, but in ten cases to the one it has been attributable to prosperity.

The Idle Christian a Hindrance.— Many church members think that if they do nothing wrong, and make no trouble, then they are all right. Not at all, sir; not at all. Here is a chariot, and we are all engaged to drag it. Some of you do not put out your hands to pull; well, then, the rest of us have to labor so much the more; and the worst of it is we have to draw you also. While you do not add to the strength which draws, you increase the weight that is to be drawn. It is all very well for you to say, "But I do not hinder;" you do hinder, you cannot help hindering. If a man's leg does not help him in walking, it certainly hinders him.

The Righteous Safe.— A certain carping infidel, after having argued with a poor countryman who knew the faith, but who knew little else, said to him, "Well, Hodge, you really are so stupid that there is no use of arguing with you, I cannot get you out of this absurd religion of yours." "Ah! well," said Hodge, "I dare say I am stupid, master, but do you know we poor people like to have two strings to our bow?" "Well," said the critic, "what do you mean by that?" "Master, I'll show you. Suppose it should all turn out as you say; suppose there is no God, and there is no hereafter, don't you see I am as well off as you are? Certainly, it will not be any worse for me than it will be for you, if we both of us get annihilated. But don't you see if it should happen to be true as I believe, what will become of

you?" Clearly in either case it must be right with the righteous; for if he should have ignorantly received a cunningly devised fable, yet, seeing according to his own experience, it makes him a better and a happier man, so far so good — he is no loser here; and he will be certainly at the last in no worse a position than the man who rejected the holy and comfortable influences of what he styled a deception. While, if the religion of Jesus should be true — ah! ghastly IF for you who doubt it? — if it should all be true, ah! then your weeping and your wailing at the discovery will be a terrible contrast to the joy and glory which God has reserved for them that love him. Upon the very lowest possible ground it will be well with the righteous, as well at any rate as with the best of other men.

Impressions Easily Wear Away.— I stood once by the side of a poor boy, whom I had taught as a Sunday-school teacher; he had received very little good training at home, and tho he was but a lad of seventeen, he became a drunkard and drank himself to death at one debauch. I saw him, and talked to him, and tried to point him to the Savior, and heard at last the death-throttle in his throat, and as I went down stairs I thought everybody a fool for doing anything except preparing to die. I began to look upon the men who drove the carts in the streets the men who were busy at their shops, and those who were selling their wares, as being all foolish for doing anything except their eternal business, and myself most of all foolish for not pointing dying sinners to a living Christ, and inviting them to trust in his precious blood. And yet, in an hour all things took their usual shape, and I began to think that I was not dying after all, and I could go away and be, I fear, as heartless as before.

Perseverance.— How do I know the winner at the foot-race? There are the spectators, and there are the runners. What strong men! what magnificent muscles! what thews and sinews! Yonder is the goal; and there it is that I must judge who is the winner: not here, at the starting-point; for "They which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize." I may select this one, or that other person, as likely to win, but I cannot be absolutely sure until the race is over. There they fly! See how they press forward, with straining muscles! But one has tripped, another faints, a third is out of breath, and others are far behind. One only wins — and who is he? Why, he who continued to the end. So I may gather from the analogy, which Paul constantly allows us, from the ancient games, that only he who continueth till he reaches the goal may be accounted a Christian at all. A ship starts on a voyage to Australia: if it stops at Madeira, or returns after reaching the Cape, would you consider that it ought to be called an emigrant ship for New South Wales? It must go the whole voyage, or it does not deserve the name. A man has begun to build a house, and has erected one side of it: do you consider him a builder if he stops there, and fails to cover it in or to finish the other walls? Do we give men praise for being warriors because they know how to make one desperate charge, but lose the campaign? Have we not, of late, smiled at the boasting despatches of commanders, in fights where both combatants fought with valor, and yet neither of them had the common sense to push on to reap the victory? What was the very strength of Wellington, but that, when a triumph had been achieved, he knew how to reap the harvest which had been sown in blood? And he only is a true conqueror, and shall be crowned at the last, who continueth till war's trumpet is blown no more. It is

with a Christian as it was with the great Napoleon: he said, "Conquest has made me what I am, and conquest must maintain me." So, under God, conquest has made you what you are, and conquest must sustain you. Your motto must be, "Excelsior;" or, if it be not, you have not learned the noble spirit of God's princes.

Did Not Really Wish to Die.— A missionary told me the story of an old negro woman in Jamaica who used to be continually singing, "Angel Gabriel, come and take Aunty Betsy home to glory," but when some wicked wag knocked at the door at the dead of night, and told her the angel Gabriel was come for Aunty Betsy, she said, "She lives next door." I am afraid it may possibly be so with us, that though we think we wish the waves of Jordan to divide that we may be landed on the other shore, we linger on the bank shivering still.

The Christian's Secret.— I have looked at this rest after rest as being a treasure concealed in a precious box. The Lord Jesus give to his people a priceless casket, called the gift of rest; it is set with brilliants and inlaid with gems, and the substance thereof is of wrought gold; whosoever possesses it feels and knows that his warfare is accomplished and his sin is pardoned. After awhile the happy owner begins to examine his treasure. It is all his own, but he has not yet seen it all, for one day he detects a secret drawer, he touches a hidden spring, and lo! before him lies a priceless Koh-i-noor surpassing all the rest. It had been given him it is certain, but he had not seen it at first, and therefore he *finds* it. Jesus Christ gives us in the gift of himself all the rest we can enjoy, even heaven's rest lies in him; but after we have received him we have to learn his value, and find out by the teaching of his Spirit the fulness of the rest which he bestows.

Vagrant Thoughts.— I remember a certain narrow and crooked lane in a certain country town, along which I was walking one day, while I was seeking the Savior. On a sudden the most fearful oaths that any of you can conceive rushed through my mind. I put my hand to my mouth to prevent the utterance. I had not, that I know of, ever heard these words; and I am certain that I had never used in my life, from my youth up, so much as one of them, for I had never been profane. But these things sorely beset me; for half an hour together the most fearful imprecations would dash through my brain. Oh, how I groaned and cried before God. That temptation passed away; but ere many days it was renewed again; and when I was in prayer, or when I was reading the Bible, these blasphemous thoughts would pour in upon me more than at any other time. I consulted with an aged godly man about it. He said to me, "Oh, all this many of the people of God have proved before you. "But," said he, "do you hate these thoughts?" "I do," I truly said. "Then," said he, "they are not yours; serve them as the old parishes used to do with vagrants — whip them and send them on to their own parish. Groan over them, repent of them, and send them on to the devil, the father, to whom they belong — for they are not yours." Do you not recollect how John Bunyan hits off the picture? He says, when Christian was going through the valley of the shadow of death, "There stepped up one to him, and whispered blasphemous thoughts into his ear, so that poor Christian thought they were his own thoughts; but they were not his thoughts at all, but the injections of a blasphemous spirit." So when you are about to lay hold on Christ, Satan will ply all his engines and try to destroy you. He cannot bear to lose one of his slaves; he will invent a fresh temptation for each believer, so that he may not put his trust in Christ."

Persecution the Fertilizer of Religion.— George Whitefield said, when he preached on Kennington Common, where they threw dead cats and rotten eggs at him, "This is only the manure of Methodism, the best thing in the world to make it grow; throw away as fast as you please." And when a stone cut him on the forehead, he seemed to preach the better for a little blood-letting.

Sham Religion.— It was but a little while ago that I had in my house a gentleman, an excellent man, and I believe a true child of God, who told me he had been brought seriously under impression, on account of sin, through hearing a sermon of late. "But," said he, "I was baptized in my childhood. When I was but young, there was a revival in our village, in New England. Mine was the hardest heart in our village; but I was found out at last. There was scarcely a girl or boy that did not join the church, and I was at last brought under deep impression. I used to weep before God, and pray to him. I went to the minister and told him I was converted, deceived him, and was baptized." And then he went on to tell me that he had dived into the blackest crimes, and gone far away, even from the profession of religion; that after going to college he had been struck off the church-roll on account of wickedness, and that up to this time he had been an infidel, and had not so much as thought of the things of the kingdom. Take heed, many of you, that you do not get a sham religion. Many jump into godliness as they would into a bath; but they are very glad to jump out of it again, when they find the world pays them better.

Indifference to Slander.— It often happens, when the devil cannot ruin a man by getting him to commit a sin, he attempts to slander him; he sends a hawk after him, and tries to bring him down by slandering his good name. I will give you a piece of advice. I know a good minister,

now in venerable old age, who was once most villainously lied against and slandered by a man who had hated him only for the truth's sake. The good man was grieved; he threatened the slanderer with a lawsuit, unless he apologized. He did apologize. The slander was printed in the papers in a public apology; and you know what was the consequence. The slander was more believed than if he had said nothing about it. And I have learned this lesson — to do with the slanderous hawk what the little birds do, *just fly up*. The hawk can not do them any hurt while they can keep above him — it is only when they come down that he can injure them. It is only when by mounting he gets above the birds, that the hawk comes sweeping down upon them, and destroys them. If any slander you, do not come down to them; let them slander on.

A Christian Home.— A religious house is the best proof of true piety. It is not my chapel, it is my house — it is not my minister, it is my home-companion who can best judge me; it is the servant, the child, the wife, the friend, that can discern most of my real character. A good man will improve his household. Rowland Hill once said, he would not believe a man to be a true Christian if his wife, his children, the servants, and even the dog and cat, were not the better for it. That is being religious. If your household is not the better for your Christianity — if men cannot say, "This is a better house than others," then be not deceived — ye have nothing of the grace of God. Let not your servant, on leaving your employ, say, "Well, this is a queer sort of a religious family; there was no prayer in the morning, I began the day with my drudgery; there was no prayer at night, I was kept at home all the Sabbath-day. Once a fortnight, perhaps, I was allowed to go out in the afternoon, when there was nowhere to go where I could hear

a gospel sermon. My master and mistress went to a place where of course they heard the blessed gospel of God — that was all for them; as for me, I might have the dregs and leavings of some overworked curate in the afternoon." Surely, Christian men will not act in that way. No! Carry out your godliness in the heart of your own family.

A Worldly Christian.— No man can serve God and mammon because there is not enough life in the heart to serve the two. Alas! many people try this, and they fail both ways. I have known a man who has tried to let some of his heart run into the world, and another part he allowed to drip into the church, and the effect has been this: When he came into the church he was suspected of hypocrisy. "Why," they said, "if he were truly with us, could he have done yesterday what he did, and then come and profess so much to-day?" The church looks upon him as a suspicious one: or if he deceive them they feel he is not of much use to them, because they have not got all his heart. What is the effect of his conduct in the world? Why, his religion is a fetter to him there. The world will not have him, and the church will not have him; he wants to go between the two, and both despise him. I never saw anybody try to walk on both sides of the street but a drunken man: *he* tried it, and it was very awkward work indeed; but I have seen many people in a moral point of view try to walk on both sides of the street, and I thought there was some kind of intoxication in them, or else they would have given it up as a very foolish thing. Now, if I thought this world and the pleasures thereof worth my seeking, I would just seek them and go after them, and I would not pretend to be religious; but if Christ be Christ, and if God be God, let us give our whole hearts to him, and not go shares with the world.

The Christian's Victory.— Victory! There is something beautiful in that word. The death of Sir John Moore, in the Peninsular war, was very touching: he fell in the arms of triumph; and sad as was his fate, I doubt not that his eye was lit up with luster by the shout of victory. So also, I suppose, that Wolfe spoke a truth, when he said, "I die happy"— having just before heard the shout, "they run, they run." I know victory, even in that bad sense — for I look not upon earthly victories as of any value — must have cheered the warrior. But, ah! how cheered the saint, when he knows that victory is his! I shall fight during all my life, but I shall write "*vici*" on my shield. I shall be "more than conqueror through him that loved me." Each feeble saint shall win the day; each man upon his crutches; each lame one; each one full of infirmity, sorrow, sickness, and weakness, shall gain the victory. "They shall come with singing into Sion; as well the blind, and lame, and halt, and the woman with child, together." So saith the Scripture. Not one shall be left out; but he shall "bring forth judgment unto victory." Victory! victory! victory! This is the lot of each Christian: he shall triumph through his dear Redeemer's name.

Unwilling Doubts not Sins.— You that are vexed at your own doubts are not to come to the conclusion that the Lord utterly rejects you. He discriminates between the folly of a child and the wickedness of a rebel: he knows what is in your heart, and knows that you are his. You are like a ship that is well anchored, and tho the tide is rushing in, and makes your vessel roll from side to side, so that you yourself stagger, yet the vessel is not loosed from its moorings, neither are you in any danger. Your faith is fixed on Christ, and this anchor holds you; tho you are tossed about a little, you will suffer no shipwreck because of sin, but much sea-sickness because of folly.

Making Idols of Children.— A mother who had lost her babe fretted and rebelled about it. She happened to be in a meeting of the Society of Friends, and there was nothing spoken that morning except this word by one female Friend, who was moved, I doubt not, by the Spirit of God, to say, "Verily, I perceive that children are idols." She did not know the condition of that mourner's mind, but it was the right word, and she to whom God applied it knew how true it was. She submitted her rebellious will, and then, as if it were magic, was at once comforted.

Attractive Christians.— They used in the old times to catch pigeons and send them out with sweet unguents on their wings: other pigeons followed them into the dovecote for the sake of their perfume, and so were captured. I would that every one of us had the heavenly anointing on our wings, the divine perfumes of peace, and joy, and rest; for then others would be fascinated to Jesus, allured to heaven.

Changeable Christians.— I knew a Christian man right well to whom I was accustomed to use one salutation whenever I saw him. He was a good man, but changeable. I said to him, "Good morning, friend! what are you now?" He was once a valiant Arminian, setting young people right as to the errors of my Calvinistic teaching. A short time after, he became exceedingly Calvinistic himself, and wanted to screw me up several degrees; but I declined to yield. Anon he became a Baptist, and agreed with me on all points, so far as I know. This was not good enough, and therefore he became a Plymouth Brother: and after that he went to the Church from which he originally set out. When I next met him I said, "Good morning, brother, what are you now?" He replied, "That is too bad, Mr. Spur-

geon: you asked me the same question last time." I replied, "Did I? But what are you now? Will the same answer do?" I knew it would not. I would earnestly say to all such brethren, "Be sober." It cannot be wise to stagger all over the road in this fashion. Make sure of your footing when you stand; make doubly sure of it before you shift.

Folly of "the Blues."— A sick and suffering brother rebuked me the other day for being cast down. He said to me, "We ought never to show the white feather: but I think you do sometimes." I asked him what he meant, and he replied, "You sometimes seem to grow desponding and low. Now I am near to die, but I have no clouds and no fears." I rejoiced to see him so joyous, and I answered, "That is right, my brother, blame me as much as you please for my unbelief, I richly deserve it." "Why," he said, "you are the father of many of us. Did you not bring me and my friend over yonder to Christ? If you get low in spirit after so much blessing, you ought to be ashamed of yourself." I could say no other than, "I am ashamed of myself, and I desire to be more confident in the future." Brethren, we must hope, and not fear.

Sent of God.— Strengthen your soul upon the persuasion that God has sent you, and then go forward. If God has sent you, who can stand against you? A Queen's messenger claims that we clear the road for him. An officer who bears the Queen's authority is authorized to lay all persons under orders to speed him. He who rides on royal business has precedence over all others. Get to feel, Christian friend, that Jesus has sent you, and herein will lie food for your courage. Know that you have a mission, and go at it; and let it be unsafe for any one to stand in your way. Let opposers know that somebody will have to clear out; for if God sent

you, in that sending there is a force and an energy which nothing can safely resist. Do not make a noise. Forbear all blustering; but quietly set yourself to work. If God has sent you, you will be like the greater Sent One, of whom we read, "He shall not strive, nor cry, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets," but at the same time "he shall not fail, nor be discouraged."

The Martyr's Victory.— There is a martyr in prison: the chains are on his wrists, and yet he sings. It has been announced to him that to-morrow is his burning day. He claps his hands right merrily, and smiles while he says, "It will be sharp work tomorrow, I shall breakfast below on fiery tribulations, but afterward I will sup with Christ. Tomorrow is my wedding day, the day for which I have long panted, when I shall sign the testimony of my life by a glorious death." The time is come; the men with the halberts precede him through the streets. Mark the serenity of the martyr's countenance. He turns to some who look upon him, and exclaims, "I value these iron chains far more than if they had been of gold; it is a sweet thing to die for Christ." There are a few of the boldest of the saints gathered round the stake, and as he unrobes himself, ere he stands upon the fagots to receive his doom, he tells them that it is a joyous thing to be a soldier of Christ, to be allowed to give his body to be burned; and he shakes hands with them, and bids them "Good-by" with merry cheer. One would think he were going to a bridal, rather than to be burned. He steps upon the fagots; the chain is put about his middle; and after a brief word of prayer, as soon as the fire begins to ascend, he speaks to the people with manful boldness. But hark! he sings whilst the fagots are crackling and the smoke is blowing upward. He sings, and when his nether parts are burned, he still goes on chanting sweetly some psalm of old. "God is our refuge

and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea."

Run When You Cannot Fly.— Now, you are not commanded in the text to be always in such a high, exalted, rapturous state of mind as that. "Rejoice evermore," but you cannot always rejoice at that rate. I have said that you cannot, and I mean it literally. There is a physical impossibility in it. The strain upon the mind would be much too great. We could not live in such a condition of excitement and tension. Sometimes we can swim in the deep waters; but who can always swim? We can take to ourselves the wings of eagles, and soar beyond the stars; but we are not condors, and cannot always fly: we are more like the sparrows which find a house near the altar of God. When we cannot mount as on wings, we think it quite sufficient if we can run without weariness, and walk without fainting.

God's Special Care.— I think that many of you may say, "Though I am least of all his saints, yet in some respects the Lord hath specially blessed me hitherto." I believe that every flower in a garden, which is tended by a wise gardener, could tell of some particular care that the gardener takes of it. He does for the dahlia what he does not for the sunflower; somewhat is wanted by the rose that is not required by the lily; and the geranium calls for an attention which is not given to the honeysuckle. Each flower wins from the gardener a special culture. The vine has a dressing all its own, and the apple-tree a pruning peculiar to itself.

Gloomy Days Our Own Fault.— We have a deep river of delights in the covenant of grace, yet we are content to paddle about its shores. We are only up to our ankles, the most of us, whereas the waters are "waters to swim in." A great sun of everlasting love shines upon the

globe of our life with tropical force, but we get away to the North Pole of doubt and fear, and then complain that the sun has such little heat, or that he is so long below the horizon. He who will not go to the fire ought not to complain that the room is cold.

Present Victory.— We have seen the artist make with his pencil, or with his charcoal, a bare outline of his picture. It is nothing more, but still one could guess what the finished picture will be from the sketch before you. One acquainted with the artist could see upon the canvas all the splendor of color peeping through the dark lines of the pencil. Now, I want you to-day to see "the patterns of things in the heavens." We have much of heaven here; at any rate, we have the Lamb who is the glory of the eternal city; we have the presence of him that sits upon the throne among us even now; we have if not the perfect holiness of heaven, yet a justification quite as complete as that of the glorified; we have the "white robes," for "the blood of the Lamb" has washed them even now; and if we have not yet the palm branches of final victory, yet thanks be to God, we are led in triumph in every place, and even now "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Therefore —

> "I would begin the music here,
> And so my soul should rise;
> Oh, for some heavenly notes to bear
> My passions to the skies."

The Common Christian Soldier.— In a great battle the general's name is mentioned; but what could he have done without the common soldiers? Wellington will always be associated with Waterloo; but, after all, it was a soldiers' battle. What could the commander have done if those in the ranks had failed him? The commander-

in-chief might very well have touched his hat to the least subaltern or to the humblest private, and have said, "I thank you, comrade. Without you we could not have conquered." The chief troubles of the great day of Waterloo arose from certain very doubtful allies, who wavered in the hour of battle — those were the general's weakness; but his hope and strength lay in those regiments which were as an iron wall against the enemy. Even thus the faithful are our joy and crown; but the unstable are our sorrow and weakness. Every ministering servant of the Lord Jesus Christ is in much the same condition as Paul; true, we are of a lower grade, and our work is on a smaller scale; but our needs are just as great. We have not all the grace which Paul possessed; but for that very reason we make the more pathetic an appeal to you, our friends and fellow-helpers, while we use the apostle's language, and cry, "We beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with us in your prayers to God for us."

The Man Holding the Rope.— It is like one who is willing to go into a far country, bearing his life in his hands; but he plaintively exclaims, "You won't forget me, will you? Tho you stay at home, you will think of me!" It reminds us of Carey, who says, when he goes to India, "I will go down into the pit, but brother Fuller and the rest of you must contribute something — you must hold the rope."

An Impregnable Fortress.— But David felt also great safety from his enemies. When he climbed the rock, and crept into his cavern, he knew that his enemies could not follow him. Had Saul come with all Israel at his back, David's band could have kept armies at bay. He must often have felt like the eagle when it has flashed upward to its nest on the craggy rock and from

thence looks down upon the hunters. He is almost out of sight, but he can see all the movements of the foe. However long the range of the rifle, the noble bird knows no fear, for he is beyond range. I think I see him sitting there quietly eyeing the enemy, of whom he knows no dread. Thus may a child of God defy the great adversary. "Let us sing," said Luther, "the forty-sixth Psalm, and defy the devil." The devil's restless nature is fretted by the serenity of the firm believer in God; and let him be fretted. His utmost rage is insufficient to hurt a single hair of the head of a believer. No adversary can carry by storm our impregnable stronghold. Tyre stood a siege of thirteen years, but our fortress has been beleaguered throughout the ages and never captured.

A Son's Boldness.— Religious people sometimes start back from the prayers of a true saint, and say, "He is too familiar." Of course a child is too familiar for the imitation of a stranger; but have you ever blamed a child for clambering his father's knee? And yet you would not think of copying him. Boy, dost thou know what thou art at? Thou art playing with a learned judge, before whom prisoners tremble, and courts are hushed. Even wise counselors speak to him as "My Lord." That urchin does not say "My lord." Look! He is plucking him by the beard; he is kissing his cheek. What presumption! No! he is the judge's child; he who is judge to others is "father" to him. So the saints of God say, "Our Father, which art in heaven," ever reverentially, but yet with sweet familiarity. They are at home with him. Beloved, may you know what that means by the teachings of the Spirit of sonship for only he can teach us the blessed freedom of being at home with God.

The Marks of Discipleship.— Somebody, years ago, uttered an atrocious lie against me — an abominable slander. I was very low and heavy of spirit at the time; but when I read it I clapped my hands for joy, for I felt, "Now I have one of the marks and seals of a child of God, for it is written, 'Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.'" The love of the Lord's brethren and the hatred of the Lord's enemies are two things to be desired.

"The Christian's Walk."— Oh, that our way may be strewn with gracious acts, as when a cloud passes over a thirsty land, and blesses it with silver showers! I have known in a certain village a spot called "The Poet's Walk," and another called "The Lovers' Walk." Oh, that ours may be "The Christian's walk!" May the good Lord perfect us in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is profitable and well-pleasing in his sight!

Quarrelling With God.— I was greatly struck with a story a dear sister told me yesterday. She was very nearly being removed from the church: she had quarreled with the Lord for taking away her husband, and she would not go to any place of worship, she felt so angry about her loss. But her little child came to her one morning, and said, "Mother, do you think Jonah was right when he said, 'I do well to be angry, even unto death'?" She replied, "O child, do not talk to me," and put the little one away, but she felt the rebuke, and it brought her back to God, and back to her church again, humbly rejoicing in him who had used this instrumentality to set her right with her Lord.

Christian Fragrance.— You know the Persian story of the scented clay. One said to it, "Clay, whence hast thou thy delicious perfume?" It answered: "I was aforetime nothing but a piece of common clay, but I lay

long in the sweet society of a rose till I drank in its fragrance and became perfumed myself." Oh, if you dwell much with God in seasons of retirement, and abide with him in all the affairs of life, you will be changed into his image. As surely as the type will make its impress upon the paper, and the seal will stamp itself upon the wax, so will the Lord impress himself upon you, and stamp his image upon you if you dwell in him.

The Christian's Apparel.— The glory of God! How shall I describe it! I must set before you a strange Scriptural picture. Mordecai must be made glorious for his fidelity to his king, and singular is the honor which his monarch ordains for him. This was the royal order. "Let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head: and let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the king delighteth to honor, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor." Can you not imagine the surprise of the Jew when robe and ring were put upon him, and when he found himself placed upon the king's horse. This may serve as a figure of that which will happen to us: we shall be glorified with the glory of God. The best robe, the best of heaven's array, shall be appointed unto us, and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

The Rooted Christian — I saw one day a number of beech trees which had formed a wood: they had all fallen to the ground through a storm. The fact was they leaned upon one another to a great extent, and the thickness of the wood prevented each tree from getting a firm hold of the soil. They kept each other up and also con-

strained each other to grow up tall and thin, to the neglect of root-growth. When the tempest forced down the first few trees, the others readily followed, one after the other. Close to that same spot I saw another tree in the open, bravely defying the blast, in solitary strength. The hurricane had beaten upon it but it had endured all its force unsheltered. That lone, brave tree seemed to be better rooted than before the storm. I thought, "Is it not so with professors?" They often hold together, and help each other to grow up, but if they have not firm personal roothold, when a storm arises they fall in rows. A minister dies, or certain leaders are taken away, and over go the members by departure from the faith and from holiness. I would have you be self-contained, growing each man into Christ for himself, rooted and grounded in love and faith and every holy grace. Then when the worst storm that ever blew on mortal man shall come, it will be said of your faith, "It could not shake it."

Faith Which Cannot be Shaken.— We read that when the flood beat upon the wise man's house "*it could not shake it.*" That is very beautiful. Not only could it not carry it away, but "it could not shake it." I see the man: he lost his money and became poor, but he did not give up his faith: "It could not shake it." He was ridiculed and slandered, and many of his former friends gave him the cold shoulder; but "It could not shake it." He went to Jesus under his great trial and he was sustained: "It could not shake it." He was very sick and his spirit was depressed within him, but still he held his confidence in Christ: "It could not shake it." He was near to die; he knew that he must soon depart out of this world, but all the pains of death and the certainty of dissolution could not shake him. He died as he lived, firm as a rock, rejoicing as much as ever, nay, rejoicing

more, because he was nearer to the kingdom and to the fruition of all his hopes. "It could not shake it." It is a grand thing to have a faith which cannot be shaken.

Sham Christians.— The character of Talkative in Pilgrim's Progress is ably drawn. I have met the gentleman many times, and can bear witness that John Bunyan was a photographer before photography was invented. Christian said of him "He talketh of prayer, of repentance, of faith, and of the new birth; but he knows but only to *talk* of them. I have been in his family, and his house is as empty of religion as the white of an egg is of savor." We have too many such persons around us who are, as to what they say, everything that is to be desired, and yet, by what they are proven to be, mere shams. As tradesmen place dummies in their shops, papered and labelled to look like goods, while yet they are nothing of the sort, so are these men marked and labelled as Christians, but the grace of God is not in them.

The Hidden Fountain.— You have seen a noble fountain in a continental city adorning a public square. See how the water leaps into the air; and then it falls into a circular basin which fills and pours out its fulness into another lower down, and this again floods a third. Hear the merry plash as the waters fall in showers and cataracts from basin to basin! If you stand at the lower basin and look upon it and say, "Herein is water;" that is true, and will be true of the next higher one, and so forth; but if you would express the truth as to where the water really is, you may have to look far away, perhaps upon a mountain's side, for there is a vast reservoir from which pipes are laid to bring these waters and force them to their height that they may descend so beautifully. Thus the love we have to our fellow-creatures drops from us like the descending silvery

cataract from the full basin, but the first source of it is the immeasurable love of God which is hidden away in his very essence, which never changes, and never can be diminished. Herein is love! If you and I desire to love our fellow Christians and to love the fallen race of man, we must be joined on to the aqueduct which conducts love from this eternal source, or else we shall soon fail in love.

The Christian Can Afford to be Poor.—"I can afford to be poor," said Dr. Gill, when one of his subscribers threatened to give up his seat, and would not attend, if the doctor preached such-and-such a doctrine. So says the Christian, "I can afford to be poor; I can afford to be despised; I have in heaven a better and more enduring substance." So, by the use of this blessed helmet, he is protected from the threatenings of the wicked world.

The Christian Defying Satan.— Martin Luther, you know, often used to defy Satan to battle. I care not to do that; but he used to say, in his queer, quaint way, "I often laugh at Satan, and there is nothing makes him so angry as when I attack him to his face, and tell him that through God I am more than a match for him; tell him to do his worst, and yet I will beat him, and tell him to put forth his fury, and yet I will overcome him." This would be presumption if in our own strength. It is only faith in the providence of God that can enable us to say so. He that has made God his refuge need fear no storm; but just as sometimes in Christmas weather the wind and snow and storm outside make the family fire seem warmer, and the family circle seem happier, so the trials and temptations of Satan do sometimes seem to add to the very peace and happiness of the true believer while he sits wrapped up in the mantle of godly confidence.

CHRISTIANITY

Persecution Futile Against Christianity.— God has chosen the weak things *to confound the mighty.* "Oh!" said Cæsar, "we will soon root up this Christianity;— off with their heads!" The different governors hastened one after another of the disciples to death, but the more they persecuted them the more they multiplied. The proconsuls had orders to destroy Christians; the more they hunted them the more Christians there were, until at last men pressed to the judgment-seat and asked to be permitted to die for Christ. They invented torments; they dragged the saints at the heels of wild horses; they laid them upon red-hot gridirons; they pulled off the skin from their flesh piece by piece; they were sawn asunder; they were wrapped up in skins and daubed with pitch, and set in Nero's gardens at night to burn; they were left to rot in dungeons; they were made a spectacle to all men in the amphitheatre; the bears hugged them to death, the lions tore them to pieces, the wild bulls tossed them upon their horns — and yet Christianity spread. All the swords of the legionaries which had put to rout the armies of all nations, and had overcome the invincible Gaul and the savage Briton, could not withstand the feebleness of Christianity; for the weakness of God is mightier than men.

The Democracy of Christianity.— A diamond is a diamond, whatever its size may be, and so little faith and great faith are of the same essence. Whether it be a grain of mustard-seed or a mountain-moving faith, it is still faith of the operation of God, faith in the same object, and faith working to the same end. Hence John, speaking to his converts, prays, "That you may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship with the Fath-

er, and with his Son Jesus Christ." If thou art a believer, thou hast a right to the same fellowship with God as the apostle had, thou hast the same perfect cleansing by the precious blood, thou hast the same adoption, the same regeneration, thou standest in the same place of love and acceptance, thou shalt be blessed with the same blessings on earth, and thou shalt enter into the same joy at the right hand of God.

CHURCH

The Power of a Live Church.— A healthy church kills error, and tears in pieces evil. Not so very long ago our nation tolerated slavery in our colonies. Philanthropists endeavored to destroy slavery; but when was it utterly abolished? It was when Wilberforce roused the church of God, and when the church of God addressed herself to the conflict, then she tore the evil thing to pieces. I have been amused with what Wilberforce said the day after they passed the Act of Emancipation. He merrily said to a friend when it was all done, "Is there not something else we can abolish?" That was said playfully, but it shows the spirit of the church of God. She lives in conflict and victory; her mission is to destroy everything that is bad in the land. See the fierce devil of intemperance how it devours men! Earnest friends have been laboring against it, and they have done something for which we are grateful, but if ever intemperance is put down, it will be when the entire church of God shall arouse herself to protest against it. When the strong lion rises up the giant of drunkenness shall fall before him. "He shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain." I augur for the world the best results from a fully aroused church. If God be in her there is no evil which she cannot overcome.

The Layman's Privilege.— There is a poor prisoner in a cell. His hair is all matted, over his eyes. A few weeks ago the judge put on the black cap, and commanded that he should be taken to the place from whence he came, and hung by the neck until dead. The poor wretch has his heart broken within him, whilst he thinks of the pinion, of the gallows, and of the drop, and of after-death. O! who can tell how his heart is rent and racked, whilst he thinks of leaving all, and going he knoweth not where! There is a man there, sound asleep upon a bed. He has been asleep there these two days, and under his pillow he has that prisoner's free pardon. I would horsewhip that scoundrel, horsewhip him soundly, for making that poor man have two days of extra misery. Why, if I had had that man's pardon, I would have been there, if I rode on the wings of lightning to get at him, and I should have thought the fastest train that ever run but slow, if I had so sweet a message to carry, and such a poor heavy heart to carry it to. But that man, that brute, is sound asleep, with a free pardon under his pillow, whilst that poor wretch's heart is breaking with dismay! Ah! do not be too hard with him: he is here today. Side by side with you this morning there is sitting a poor penitent sinner; God has pardoned him, and intends that you should tell him that good news. He sat by your side last Sunday, and he wept all the sermon through, for he felt his guilt. If you had spoken to him then, who can tell? He might have had comfort; but there he is now — you do not tell him the good news. Do you leave that to me do do? Ah! sirs, but you cannot serve God by proxy; what the minister does is nought to you; you have your own personal duty to do, and God has given you a precious promise. It is now on your heart. Will you not turn round to your next neighbor, and tell him that promise? O! there is many an

aching heart that aches because of our idleness in telling the good news of this salvation.

A Sleeping Church.— There is a fortress, yonder, far away in India. A troop of those abominable Sepoys have surrounded it. Bloodthirsty hell-hounds, if they once gain admission, they will rend the mother and her children, and cut the strong man in pieces. They are at the gates: Their cannon are loaded, their bayonets thirst for blood, and their swords are hungry to slay. Go through the fortress, and the people are all asleep. There is the warder on the tower, nodding on his bayonet. There is the captain in his tent, with his pen in his hand, and his dispatches before him, asleep at the table. There are soldiers lying down in their tents, ready for the war, but all slumbering. There is not a man to be seen keeping watch, there is not a sentry there. All are asleep. Why, my friends, you would say, "Whatever is the matter here? What can it be? Has some great wizard been waving his wand, and put a spell upon them all? Or are they all mad? Have their minds fled? Sure, to be asleep in wartime is indeed outrageous. Here! take down that trumpet; go close up to the captain's ear, and blow a blast, and see if it does not awake him in a moment. Just take away that bayonet from the soldier that is asleep on the walls, and give him a sharp prick with it, and see if he does not awake." But surely, surely, nobody can have patience with people asleep, when the enemy surround the walls and are thundering at the gates.

Now, Christians, this is your case. Your life is a life of warfare; the world, the flesh, and the devil; that hellish trinity, and your poor flesh is a wretched mud-work behind which to be intrenched. Are you asleep? Asleep, when Satan has fire-balls of lust to hurl into the windows of your eyes — when he has arrows of tempta-

tion to shoot into your heart — when he has snares into which to trap your feet? Asleep, when he has undermined your very existence, and when he is about to apply the match with which to destroy you, unless sovereign grace prevents? Oh! sleep not, soldier of the cross! To sleep in war-time is utterly inconsistent. Great Spirit of God forbid that we should slumber.

CONSCIENCE

Conscience Needs Illumination.— I do not hesitate to say, that we all unwittingly allow ourselves in practices, which clearer light would show to be sins. Even the best of men have done this in the past. For instance, John Newton, in his trading for slaves in his early days, never seemed to have felt that there was any wrong in it; and Whitefield in accepting slaves for his orphanage in Georgia, never raised or dreamed of raising the question as to whether slavery was in itself sinful. Perhaps advancing light will show that many of the habits and customs of our present civilization are essentially bad, and our grandsons will wonder how we could have acted as we did. It may need centuries before the national conscience, or even the common Christian conscience, will be enlightened up to the true standard of right; and the individual man may need many a chastisement and rebuke from the Lord ere he has fully discerned between good and evil.

A Fearful Conscience.— I have heard of a man who was so constantly in debt, and continually being arrested by the bailiffs, that once upon a time, when going by some area railings, having caught his sleeve upon one of the rails, he turned round and said, "I don't owe you anything, sir." He thought it was a bailiff. And so it is with unforgiven sinners, wherever they are, they think they are going to be arrested. They can enjoy nothing.

Even their mirth, what is it, but the color of joy, the crackling of thorns under the pot? there is no solid, steady fire. But when once a man is forgiven, he can walk anywhere. He says, "to me it is nothing whether I live or die, whether ocean depths engulf me, or whether I am buried beneath the avalanche; with sin forgiven, I am secure. Death has no sting to him. His conscience is at rest.

True to His Conscience.— I know a man whose master had tried to make him go against his conscience; but he said, "No, sir." And the master thought, "Well, he is a very valuable servant; but I will beat him, if I can." So he threatened that if he did not do as he wished he would turn him away. The man was dependent on his master, and he knew not what he should do for his daily bread. So he said to his master honestly at once, "Sir, I don't know of any other situation; I should be very sorry to leave you, for I have been very comfortable, but if it comes to that, sir, I would sooner starve than submit my conscience to any one." The man left, and the master had to go after him to bring him back again. And so it will be in every case. If Christians are but faithful, they must win the day.

CONVERSATION

Vapid Conversation.— Brothers, I leave it to yourselves to judge whether your communications with one another are always such as they should be. Are they always worthy of you? What communications have ye had this morning? Can I make a guess? "Nice and fresh this morning." "Quite a change in the weather." Is not this the style? How often we instruct each other about what we all know! When it rains so as to soak our garments we gravely tell each other that it is very wet. Yes, and if the sun shines we are all eager to communi-

cate the wonderful information that it is warm. Dear me, what instructors of our generation we are! Could we not contrive to change the subject? Is it because we have nothing to say of love, and grace, and truth that we meet and part without learning or teaching anything? Perhaps so. I wish we had a little more small change of heavenly converse: we have our crowns and sovereigns for the pulpit, we need groats and pence for common talk, all stamped with the image and superscription of the King of heaven. O Holy Spirit enrich us after this sort.

CONVERSION

Look and Live.— We shall never forget the day, some of us, when we left off self-righteousness and believed in Christ to the salvation of our souls. The marvel was done in a minute, but the change was so great that we can never explain it, or cease to bless the Lord for it.

> "Happy day! Happy day!
> When Jesus washed my sins away."

I recollect the morning when salvation came to me as I sat in a little Primitive Methodist chapel under the gallery, and the preacher said, "That young man looks unhappy;" and added, "Young man, you will never find peace except you look to Christ;" and he called out to me, "Look!" With a voice of thunder he shouted, "Young man, look! Look now!" I did look, I turned the eye of faith to Jesus at once. My burden disappeared, and my soul was merry as a bird let loose from her cage, even as it is now as often as I remember the blessed salvation of Jesus Christ.

Christ at the Door.— I saw a young woman from America in the vestry some little time ago who came in great concern of soul to know the way of salvation, and I said

to her, "Do you not see it? If you trust Christ, you are saved." I quoted the Scriptures which teach this great truth and made them plain to her, until the Holy Spirit opened her eyes; light came on her face in a moment, and she said, "I do see it. I trust Christ with all my heart: and I am to believe that I am saved because I trust Jesus, and he has promised to save believers?" "Yes," I replied, "You are getting on the rock now." "I feel," she said, "a deep peace beginning in my soul, but I cannot understand how it can be, for my grandfather belonged to the old school Presbyterians, and he told me he was six years before he could get peace, and had to be put into a lunatic asylum, for he was so miserable." Ah, yes, I have no doubt such cases have happened. Some will go seventeen thousand miles round about merely to go across a street, but there is no need for it. There it is —"The word is nigh thee, on thy lips and in thy heart. If with thy heart thou wilt believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and with my mouth make confession of him, thou shalt be saved."

Man's Convert, Not Christ's.— You have heard Mr. Hill's story of meeting a man in the street one night, who hiccuped up to him and said, "How do you do, Mr. Hill? I am one of your converts." "Yes," said Rowland, "I should say you are, but you are none of God's, or else you would not be drunk." Converts of that sort are far too numerous.

A Stranger Finding Christ.— Some three years ago I was talking with an aged minister, and he began fumbling about in his waistcoat pocket, but he was a long while before he found what he wanted, At last he brought out a letter that was well nigh worn to pieces, and he said, "God Almighty bless you! God Almighty bless you!" And I said, "Friend, what is it?" He said, "I had a son. I thought he would be the stay of my

old age, but he disgraced himself, and he went away from me, and I could not tell where he went, only he said he was going to America. He took a ticket to sail for America from the London Docks, but he did not go on the particular day that he expected." This aged minister bade me read the letter, and I read it, and it was like this:—"Father, I am here in America. I have found a situation, and God has prospered me. I write to ask your forgiveness for the thousand wrongs that I have done you, and the grief I have caused you, for, blessed be God, I have found the Savior. I have joined the church of God here, and hope to spend my life in God's service. It happens thus: I did not sail for America the day I expected. I went down to the Tabernacle to see what it was like, and God met with me. Mr. Spurgeon said, 'Perhaps there is a runaway son here. The Lord call him by his grace.' And he did." "Now," said he, as he folded up the letter and put it in his pocket, "that son of mine is dead, and he is in heaven, and I love you, and I shall do so as long as I live, because you were the means of bringing him to Christ!"

Joy in Heaven Over a Child's Conversion.— A poor neglected little boy in ragged clothing had run about the streets for many a day. Tutored in crime, he was paving his path to the gallows; but one morning he passed by a humble room, where some men and women were sitting together teaching poor ragged children. He stepped in there, a wild Bedouin of the streets; they talked to him; they told him about a soul and about an eternity — things he had never heard before; they spoke of Jesus, and of good tidings of great joy to this poor friendless lad. He went another Sabbath, and another; his wild habits hanging about him, for he could not get rid of them. At last it happened that his teacher said to him, one day, "Jesus Christ receiveth sinners." That little

boy ran, but not home, for it was but a mockery to call it so — where a drunken father and a lascivious mother kept a hellish riot together. He ran, and under some dry arch, or in some wild unfrequented corner, he bent his little knees, and there he cried, that poor creature in his rags, "Lord, save me, or I perish;" and the little Arab was on his knees — the little thief was saved! He said —

"Jesus, lover of my soul, let me to thy bosom fly;"

And up from that old arch, from that forsaken hovel, there flew a spirit, glad to bear the news to heaven, that another heir of glory was born to God.

A Strange Conversion.— I knew a preacher of the Gospel who was converted in a theatre. He was listening to a play, an old-fashioned piece, that ended with a sailor's drinking a glass of gin before he was hung, and he said, "Here's to the prosperity of the British nation, and the salvation of my immortal soul;" and down went the curtain; and down went my friend too, for he ran home with all his might. Those words, "The salvation of my immortal soul, had struck him to the quick; and he sought the Lord Jesus in his chamber. Many a day he sought him, and at last he found him, to his joy and confidence.

Conversion Necessary.— Furthermore, it is quite certain that human nature cannot be made better, for many have tried it, but they have always failed. A man, trying to improve human nature, is like trying to change the position of a weathercock, by turning it round to the east when the wind is blowing west; he has but to take his hand off and it will be back again to its place. So have I seen a man trying to restrain nature — he is an angry, bad-tempered man, and he is trying to cure himself a bit and he does, but it comes out, and if it does not burn

right out, and the sparks do not fly abroad, yet it burns within his bones till they grow white with the heat of malice and there remains within his heart a residuum of the ashes of revenge.

Transformation Through Conversion.— I know a village, once, perhaps, the most profane in England — a village inundated by drunkenness and debauchery of the worst kind, where it was impossible almost for an honest traveler to stop in the public house without being annoyed by blasphemy; a place noted for incendiaries and robbers. One man, the ringleader of all listened to the voice of God. That man's heart was broken. The whole gang came to hear the gospel preached, and they sat and seemed to reverence the preacher as if he were a God and not a man. These men became changed and reformed; and every one who knows the place affirms that such a change had never been wrought but by the power of the Holy Ghost.

Diamonds Out of Pebble Stones.— There was a poor man about sixty years old; he had been a rough sailor, one of the worst men in the village; it was his custom to drink, and he seemed to be delighted when he was cursing and swearing. He came into the chapel, however, one Sabbath day, when one nearly related to me was preaching the text concerning Jesus weeping over Jerusalem. And the poor man thought, "What! did Jesus Chrsit ever weep over such a wretch as I am?" He thought he was too bad for Christ to care for him. At last he came to the minister, and said, "Sir, sixty years have I been sailing under the standard of the devil; it is time I should have a new owner; I want to scuttle the old ship and sink her altogether! then I shall have a new one, and I shall sail under the colors of Prince Immanuel." Ever since that moment that man has been a praying character, walking before God in all sincerity,

Yet, he was the very last man you would have thought of. Somehow God does choose the last men; he does not care for the diamond, but he picks up the pebble-stones, for he is able, out of "stones, to raise up children unto Abraham." God is more wise than the chemist: he not only refines gold, but he transmutes base metal into precious jewels; he takes the filthiest and the vilest, and fashions them into glorious beings, makes them saints, whereas they have been sinners, and sanctifies them, whereas they have been unholy.

Changed by Conversion.— You have read of James Haldane. Once, when unconverted, he threw a ship's tumbler at the head of a person who insulted him; but when regenerated on another occasion of insult, he simply said, "I would resent it, but I have learned to forgive injuries and overlook insults." Men were obliged to say of him, "There is something in religion which can bring such a lion as that down, and make him such a lamb." Thus you will confirm the witness of Christ, if you bear up against persecution.

An Infidel's Conversion.— I received a long letter from a certain city, from one who has been one of the leaders of the secular society in that place. The writer says, "I purchased one of the pamphlets entitled 'Who is this Spurgeon?' and also your portrait (or a portrait sold as yours) for 3d. I brought these home, and exhibited them in my shop window. I was induced to do so from a feeling of derisive pleasure. The title of the pamphlet is, naturally, suggestive of caricature, and it was especially to incite that impression that I attached it to your portrait and placed it in my window. But I also had another object in view. I thought by its attraction to improve my trade. I am not at all in the book or paper business, which rendered its exposure and my motive the more conspicuous. I have taken it down

now: *I am taken down, too.* . . . I had bought one of your sermons of an old infidel a day or two previous. In that sermon I read these words:—'They go on; that step is safe — they take it; the next is safe — they take it; their foot hangs over a gulf of darkness.' I read on, but the word darkness staggered me. It was all dark with me. 'True, the way has been safe so far, but I am lost in bewilderment. No, no, no, I will not risk it.' I left the apartment in which I had been musing, and as I did so, the three words, 'Who can tell?' seemed to be whispered at my heart. I determined not to let another Sunday pass without visiting a place of worship. How soon my soul might be required of me I knew not, but felt that it would be mean, base, cowardly, not to give it a chance. Ay, my associates may laugh, scoff, deride, call me coward, turncoat, I will do an act of justice to my soul. I went to the chapel; I was just stupefied with awe. What could I want there? The doorkeeper opened his eyes wider, and involuntarily demanded, 'It's Mr. —— isn't it?' 'Yes,' I said, 'it is.' He conducted me to a seat, and afterward brought me a hymn-book. I was fit to burst with anguish. 'Now,' I thought, 'I am here, if it be the house of God, heaven grant me an audience, and I will make full surrender. O God, show me some token by which I may know that thou art, and that thou wilt in no wise cast out the vile deserter who has ventured to seek thy face and thy pardoning mercy.' I opened the hymn-book to divert my mind from feelings that were rending me, and the first words that caught my eyes were,

> "'Dark, dark indeed the grave would be,
> Had we no light, O God, from thee.'"

After giving some things which he looks upon as evidences that he is a true convert of religion, he closes up

by saying, "O sir, tell this to the poor wretch whose pride, like mine, has made him league with hell; tell it to the hesitating and to the timid; tell it to the cooling Christian, that God is a very present help to all that are in need.

A Notable Conversion.— The chaplain of a jail, a dear friend of mine, once told me a surprising case of conversion in which a knowledge of the covenant of grace was the chief instrument of the Holy Spirit. My friend had under his charge a man most cunning and brutal. He was singularly repulsive, even in comparison with other convicts. He had been renowned for his daring, and for the utter absence of all feeling when committing acts of violence. I think he had been called "the king of the garotters." The chaplain had spoken to him several times, but had not succeeded even in getting an answer. The man was sullenly set against all instruction. At last he expressed a desire for a certain book, but as it was not in the library the chaplain pointed to the Bible, which was placed in his cell, and said, "Did you ever read *that* Book?" He gave no answer, but looked at the good man as if he would kill him. The question was kindly repeated, with the assurance that he would find it well worth reading. "Sir," said the convict, "you would not ask me such a question if you knew who I was. What have I to do with a Book of that sort?" He was told that his character was well known to the chaplain, and that for this very reason he recommended the Bible as a Book which would suit his case. "It would do me no good," he cried, "I am past all feeling." Doubling up his first he struck the iron door of the cell, and said, "My heart is as hard as that iron; there is nothing in any book that will ever touch me." "Well," said the chaplain, "you want a new heart. Did you ever read the covenant of grace?" To

which the man answered sullenly by inquiring what he meant by such talk. His friend replied, "Listen to these words —'A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.'" The words struck the man with amazement, as well they might; he asked to have the passage found for him in the Bible. He read the words again and again; and when the chaplain came back to him next day, the wild beast was tamed. "Oh, sir," he said, "I never dreamed of such a promise! I never believed it possible that God would speak in such a way as that to men. If he gives me a new heart it will be a miracle of mercy; and yet I think," he said, "he is going to work that miracle upon me, for the very hope of a new nature is beginning to touch me as I never was touched before." That man became gentle in manner, obedient to authority, and childlike in spirit.

A New Creature.— Is it not said of Augustine that after his conversion he was met by a fallen woman who had known him in his sin, and he passed her by? She said, "Austin, it is I;" and he turned and said, "But I am not Austin. I am not the man you once knew, for I have become a new creature in Christ Jesus." That is what the Lord Jesus Christ can do for you. Do you not believe it? It is true, whether you believe it or not. Oh that you would look to Jesus and begin to live! It is time a change was made; is it not? Who can change you but the Lord Jesus?

The Brand Plucked Out of the Fire.— There was one who went to hear, I believe, Mr. Toplady preach, the very day when he was aged a hundred. He had been a constant neglecter of the house of God, but when he arrived at the age of a hundred, attracted by the fame of Mr. Toplady, who was an exceedingly popular, as he certainly was a highly evangelical, preacher, and happened to be preaching in the town where the man lived, he said he

would go on that day to hear him, that he might recollect his birthday. He went, and that day God in his grace met with him. I remember, too, the instance of a man who was converted by a sermon which he heard Mr. Flavel preach, and which was blessed to him eighty-three years after he had heard it, when he was at the age of ninety-eight. The word came with power to his soul after all that interval of time. Just as he was on the borders of the tomb, he was made to enter into eternal life. May the God of infinite mercy give such a blessing to aged ones here, and they will be brands plucked out of the fire.

Better Than He Expected.— It does not matter why the people come to hear the gospel; God can bless them in any case. If Christ is preached, men will be saved, even if they come to disturb. "Sir," said one to me, "I had been to bargain about a pair of ducks on Sunday morning, and I passed by the door, and I thought I would just look in. There and then the Lord met with me, and those ducks were forgotten, for I found a Savior."

Came to Scoff but Remained to Pray.— I read in the Life of John Wesley a story of Methodists meeting in a barn, and how certain of the villagers, who were afraid to break through the door, resolved to place one inside who would open the door to them during the service, that they might disturb the congregation. This person went in before service began, and concealed himself in a sack in a corner of the barn. When the Methodists began to sing, he liked the tune so well that he would not get out of the sack till he had heard it through. Then followed a prayer, and during that prayer God worked on the man in the sack, so that he began to cry for mercy. The good people looked around, and were astonished to find a sinner in a sack seeking his Savior. The door

was not opened to the mob after all; for he who intended to do so was converted.

Joy of Conversion.— I remember hearing Dr. Alexander Fletcher, when speaking to children, tell them a simple anecdote in order to illustrate the joy of a man when he gets delivered from sin. He said, "I saw upon the pavement three or four little chimney-sweeps jumping about and throwing up their heels in great delight. And I asked them, 'My boys, what are you making all this demonstration for?' 'Ah!' said they, 'if you had been locked up for three months, you would do the same when you once got out of prison.'" I thought it a good illustration. We can not wonder that people are joyous and glad when, after being long shut up in the prison of the law, all sad and miserable, they have felt their bonds broken, seen the door of the jail opened, and obtained a legal discharge. What heed they about trials and troubles, or anything else? They could leap over the mountains: "By our God we leap over a wall," may they say. "A troop may overcome, but we shall overcome at last." The heart seems scarcely big enough to hold the joy, and it bursts out, hardly knowing what to do or say. Thus it is at that wondrous hour which comes but once in a Christian's life, when he first feels himself delivered.

THE CROSS

The Token of the Cross.—I had the pleasure of riding into the Leonine city in Rome a short time after the Italian troops had taken possession, and I noticed that every house had marked up most conspicuously the arms of the kingdom of Italy and the name of Victor Emmanuel. They were not content to have it over their doors, but all over the fronts of the houses you read

"Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy," showing that they were right glad to escape from the dominion of the Pope, and to avow their allegiance to a constitutional king. Surely if for a human monarch and the earthly freedom which he brought men could thus set up his escutcheon everywhere, you and I who believe in Jesus are bound to exhibit the blood-red token, and to keep it always conspicuous.

Salvation at the Foot of the Cross.— There was a young man in Edinburg who wished to be a missionary. He was a wise young man; he thought —"Well, if I am to be a missionary, there is no need for me to transport myself far away from home; I may as well be a missionary in Edinburg." There's a hint to some of you ladies, who give away tracts in your district, and never give your servant Mary one. Well, this young man started, and determined to speak to the first person he met. He met one of those old fishwives; those of us who have seen them can never forget them; they are extraordinary women indeed. So stepping up to her he said, "Here you are, coming with your burden on your back; let me ask you if you have got another burden, a spiritual burden!" "What!" she said, "do you mean that burden in John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress? Because if you do, young man, I have got rid of that many years ago, before you were born. But I went a better way to work than the Pilgrim did. The evangelist that John Bunyan talks about was one of your parsons that do not preach the gospel; for he said, 'Keep that light in thine eye and run to the wicket-gate.' Why, man alive! that was not the place for him to run to. He should have said, 'Do you see that cross? Run there at once! But instead of that, he sent the poor Pilgrim to the wicket-gate first; and much good he got by going there! He got tumbling into the slough, and was like to have been killed

by it." "But did not you," he asked, "go through any Slough of Despond?" "Yes, young man, I did; but I found it a great deal easier going through with my burden off than with it on my back." The old woman was quite right. John Bunyan put the getting rid of the burden too far off from the commencement of the Pilgrimage. If he meant to show what usually happens, he was right; but if he meant to show what ought to have happened, he is wrong. We must not say to the sinner, "Now, sinner, if thou wilt be saved go to the baptismal pool; go to the wicket-gate; go to the church; do this or that." No, the cross should be right in front of the wicket-gate; and we should say to the sinner, "Throw thyself there, and thou art safe; but thou art not safe till thou canst cast off thy burden, and lie at the foot of the cross, and find peace in Jesus.

The Cross a Stumbling-Block.—Nothing provokes the devil like the cross. Modern theology has for its main object the obscuration of the doctrine of atonement. These modern cuttle-fishes make the water of life black with their ink. They make out sin to be a trifle, and the punishment of it to be a temporary business; and thus they degrade the remedy by underrating the disease. We are not ignorant of their devices. Expect, my brethren, that the clouds of darkness will gather as to a centre around the cross, that they may hide it from the sinner's view. But, expect this also, that there darkness shall meet its end. Light springeth out of that darkness — the light eternal of the undying Son of God, who having risen from the dead, liveth for ever to scatter the darkness of evil.

The Plea of the Cross.— If I had offended my father, I should wish to be at peace with him directly; and if my father said to me, "My son, I will be reconciled to you if you will go and speak to your brother about it," well, I

should not think it hard, for I love my brother as well as my father, and I would go to him at once, and so all would be well. God says, "Go to Jesus; I am in him. You can reach me there — go round by his cross; you will find me reconciled there. Away from the cross I am a Judge, and my terrors will consume you. With the cross between you and me, I am a Father, and you shall behold my face beaming with love to you."

DEATH

Death the End of Probation.—I have sometimes likened the hour of our death to that celebrated picture, which I think you have seen in the National Gallery, of Perseus holding up the head of Medusa. That head turned all persons into stone who looked upon it. There is a warrior there with a dart in his hand; he stands stiffened, turned into stone, with the javelin even in his fist. There is another, with a poinard beneath his robe, about to stab; he is now the statute of an assassin, motionless and cold. Another is creeping along stealthily, like a man in ambuscade, and there he stands a consolidated rock; he has looked only upon that head, and he is frozen into stone. Well, such is death. What I am when death is held before me, that I must be forever.

Dying Grace.— I remember my aged grandfather once preached a sermon which I have not forgotten. He was preaching from the text "The God of all grace," and he somewhat interested the assembly, after describing the different kinds of grace that God gave, by saying at the end of each period, "But there is one kind of grace that you do not want." After each sentence there came the like, "But there is one kind of grace you do not want." And, then, he wound up by saying, "You don't want dying grace in living moments, but you shall have dying

grace when you want it." Now, you are testing yourself by a condition in which you are not placed. If you are placed in the condition, you shall have grace enough if you put your trust in Christ. In a party of friends we were discussing the question, whether if the days of martyrdom should come, we were prepared to be burned. Well, now, I must frankly say, that speaking as I feel to-day, I am not prepared to be burned. But I do believe if there were a stake in Smithfield, and I knew that I were to be burned there at one o'clock, that I should have grace enough to be burned at one o'clock; but I have not yet got to a quarter past twelve, and the time has not come yet. Do not expect dying grace, until you want it, and when the time comes, you may be sure you will have sufficient grace to bear it. Cast out that stumbling-block, then. Rest thyself on Christ, and trust him to help thee in thy dying hour.

Death Certain.— "It is appointed unto all men once to die, and after death the judgment." Run! run! but the fleet pursuer shall overtake thee. Like the stag before the hounds we fly swifter than the breeze, but the dogs of Death shall outstrip us: Fever and plague, weakness and decay; he hath but to let slip these, and they are on us, and who can resist their fury? There is a black camel upon which Death rides, say the Arabs, and that must kneel at every man's door. With impartial hand he dashes down the palace of the monarch as well as the cabin of the peasant. At every man's door there hangs that black knocker, and Death hath but to uplift it and the dread sound is heard, and the uninvited guest sits down to banquet on our flesh and blood. Die I must. No physician can stretch out my life beyond its allotted term. I must cross that river. I may use a thousand stratagems, but I cannot escape. Even now I am like the deer surrounded by the hunters in a circle, a circle

which is narrowing every day; and soon must I fall and pour out my life upon the ground. Let me never forget, then, that while other things are uncertain, death is sure.

Death the Christian Awakening.— Let us imitate Mr. Wesley's calm anticipation of his end. A lady once asked Mr. Wesley, "Suppose that you knew you were to die at twelve o'clock to-morrow night, how would you spend the intervening time?" "How, madam?" he replied, "why just as I intend to spend it now. I should preach this evening at Gloucester, and again at five to-morrow morning; after that I should ride to Tewkesbury, preach in the afternoon, and meet the society in the evening. I should then repair to friend Martin's house, who expects to entertain me; converse and pray with the family as usual; retire to my room at ten o'clock, commend myself to my heavenly Father, lie down to rest, and wake up in glory."

Certainty of Death Should Humble Us.— When Saladin lay a-dying he bade them take his winding sheet and carry it upon a lance through the camp, with the proclamation, "This is all that remains of the mighty Saladin, the conqueror of nations." A lingerer in the graveyard will take up your skull one day and moralize upon it, little knowing how wise a man you were. None will then do you reverence. Therefore be humble.

Death a Mercy.— It were a sad sentence if we were bound over to dwell in this poor world for ever. Who among us would wish to realize in his own person the fabled life of the Wandering Jew, or even Prester John? Who desires to go up and down among the sons of men for twice a thousand years? If the Supreme should say, "Live here for ever," it were a malediction rather than a benediction. To grow ripe and to be carried home like shocks of corn in their season, is not this a fit and fair thing? To labor through a blessed day, and then at nightfall to

go home and to receive the wages of grace — is there anything dark and dismal about that? God forgive you that you ever thought so! If you are the Lord's own child, I invite you to look this home-going in the face until you change your thought and see no more in it of gloom and dread, but indeed a very heaven of hope and glory.

Death Like Going to Bed.—The child has to go to bed, but it does not cry, if mother is going upstairs with it. It is quite dark: but what of that? The mother's eyes are lamps to the child. It is very lonely and still. Not so; the mother's arms are the child's company, and her voice is its music. O, Lord, when the hour comes for me to go to bed, I know that thou wilt take me there, and speak lovingly into my ear; therefore I cannot fear, but will with faith and hope, even look forward to that hour of thy manifested love.

Death Sets Us Free.— I am told that persons who in the cruel ages had lain in prison for years suffered much more in the moment of the knocking off of their fetters than they had endured for months in wearing the hard iron; and yet I suppose that no man languishing in a dungeon would have been unwilling to stretch out his arm or leg, that the heavy chains might be beaten off by the smith. We should all be content to endure that little inconvenience to obtain lasting liberty. Now, such is death — the knocking off of the fetters; yet the iron may never seem to be so truly iron as when that last liberating blow of grace is about to fall. Let us not mind the harsh grating of the key as it turns in the lock; if we understand it aright it will be as music to our ears. Imagine that your last hour is come! The key turns with pain for a moment; but, lo, the bolt is shot! The iron gate is open! The spirit is free! Glory be unto the Lord for ever and ever!

A Message from the Grave.— History tells us of Peter Waldo, of Lyons, who was sitting at a banquet as thoughtless and careless as any of the revellers, when suddenly one at the table bowed his head and died. Waldo was startled into thought, and went home to seek his God; he searched the Scriptures, and, according to some, became a great helper, if not the second founder, of the Waldensian church, which in the Alpine valleys kept the lamp of the gospel burning when all around was veiled in night. A whole church of God was thus strengthened and perpetuated by the hallowed influence of death upon a single mind. I suppose it is also true that Luther in his younger days, walking with his friend Alexis, saw him struck to the ground by a flash of lightning, and became thenceforward prepared in heart for that deep work of grace through which he learned the doctrine of justification by faith, and rose to be the liberator of Europe from Papal bondage. How much every way we owe to this weighty subject! Among the earnest, the prayerful, the holy, many must own that the vaults of death have brought them spiritual health. Men have been helped to live by remembering that they must die: yea, some men knew nothing of the highest form of life till death aroused them from their deadly slumbers.

Death Can do no Real Harm.— Certain Swiss peasants not very long ago were feeding their flocks on one of the lofty upland valleys. On one side of the pasturage stood a number of *chalets*, or wooden huts, in which they were accustomed to live during the summer, poor shelters which were left as soon as the winter set in. One day they heard a strange rumbling up in the lofty Alps, and they understood what it meant; it meant that a mass of rock or snow or ice had fallen, and would soon come crushing down in the form of an avalanche. In a brief

space their fears were realized, for they saw a tremendous mass come rushing from above, bearing destruction in its course. What did it destroy? Only the old, crazy *chalets:* that was all. Every man of the shepherds was safe, and untouched: the event was rather to them a matter which caused a Te Deum to be sung in the village church below than a subject for mourning and sorrow. They said, "The avalanche is terrible, but it has not slain the aged mother, nor crushed the babe in its cradle: it has injured none of us, but only buried a few hovels which we can soon rebuild." Their case is a picture of ours. The avalanche of death will fall; but O ye saints when it comes this is all it will do for you — your earthly house will be dissolved! Will you fret over so small a loss?

Dying Without Hope.— Some years ago I was awakened about three o'clock in the morning by a sharp ring of the doorbell. I was urged without delay to visit a house not very far from London Bridge. I went; and up two pair of stairs I was shown into a room the occupants of which were a nurse and a dying man. There was nobody else. "Oh, sir," said she, "Mr. So-and-so, about half-an-hour ago, begged me to send for you." "What does he want?" I asked. "He is dying, sir," she replied. I said, "I see that. What sort of a man was he?" "He came home last night, sir, from Brighton. He had been out all day. I looked for a Bible, sir, but there is not one in the house; I hope you have got one with you." "Oh," I said, "a Bible would be of no use to him now. If he could understand me I could tell him the way of salvation in the very words of Holy Scripture." I spoke to him, but he gave me no answer. I spoke again; still there was no reply. All sense had fled. I stood a few minutes gazing at his face, till I perceived he was dead. His soul had departed. That

man in his lifetime had been wont to jeer at me. In strong language he had often denounced me as a hypocrite. Yet he was no sooner smitten with the darts of death than he sought my presence and my counsel, feeling no doubt in his heart that I was a servant of God, though he did not care to own it with his lips. There I stood, unable to help him. Promptly as I had responded to his call, what could I do, but look at his corpse, and go home again. He had, when too late, sighed for the ministry of reconciliation, sought to enter in, but he was not able.

Death of the Wicked.— I never wish to stand by the deathbed of any who die in their sins; this is a dreadful woe indeed, to be wrapped in the black winding-sheet of guilt. I have seen the eyes starting from the sockets; I have seen the throat dried up like a potsherd; I have heard the cries of one man in death whom I visited. The scene comes up before me at the present moment as I saw him rise in his bed and shriek, "O God, I will not die, there is no mercy for me." He begged of us to pray for him, and yet he knew that our prayers were of no avail. "I have had my seasons," said he, "but I can't repent; I shall die in a short time, and I shall soon be in hell." "Water," said he, "give me water." Yet again he cried, "O, God, I cannot die, I will not die," and this was a prelude to his departure, for he shortly afterwards expired in desperate agony. Death is indeed a woe to such a man as that.

DECISION

Indecision.— "Now," says the prophet, "how long halt ye?" or, if you like to read it so, "how long *limp* ye between two opinions?" (How long *wriggle* ye between two opinions? would be a good word, if I might em-

ploy it.) He represents them as like a man whose legs are entirely out of joint; he first goes on one side, and then on the other, and can not go far either way. I could not describe it without putting myself into a most ludicrous posture.

The Great Decision.— I can scarcely recall the details of a little incident in Russian history which might illustrate the emergency: but the fact, as far as my memory serves, was this. The Czar had died suddenly, and in the dead of night one of the counselors of the empire came to the Princess Elizabeth and said to her, "You must come at once and take possession of the crown." She hesitated, for there were difficulties in the way, and she did not desire the position. But he said, "Now, sit down, Princess, for a minute." Then he drew her two pictures. One was the picture of herself and the Count thrown into prison, racked with tortures, and presently both brought out to die beneath the axe. "That," he said, "you can have if you like." The other picture was of herself with the imperial crown of all the Russias on her brow, and all the princes bowing before her, and all the nation doing her homage. "That," said he, "is the other side of the question. But, to-night, your Majesty must choose which it shall be." With the two pictures vividly depicted before her mind's eye she did not hesitate long, but cast in her choice for the crown. Now, I would fain paint to you such pictures, only I lack the skill. You will either sink forever down in deeper and yet deeper woe, filled with remorse because you brought it all upon yourself, or else, if you decide for Christ, and trust in him, you shall enter into the bliss of those who forever and forever, without admixture of grief, enjoy felicity before the throne of God. To my mind, there ought to be no halting as to the choice. It should be made. I pray God's Holy

Spirit to help you to make it to-night. On this winged hour eternity is hung. The choice of this night may be the cooling of the wax which now is soft. Once cooled, it will bear the impress throughout eternity. God grant it may be a resolve for Christ, for his cause, for his cross, for his crown.

Solemn Decisions.— I am told that just under the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral there is the mark of a workman's hammer, and it is said that years ago one who was engaged in the roof fell down and there met his death. It is the place where a soul departed, where a man died. I do not know where it is, but it may be that there is a solemn spot here to-night where a soul will be lost forever. Maybe the moment has come when the wax upon the soul's death-warrant shall grow cold, when it shall say in its heart, "I will have none of these things," and when God shall say, "Thou shalt have none of them; I will let thee alone; thy conscience shall never be troubled again; thou shalt go through life in peace, thou shalt go to thy death with carelessness; only in hell shalt thou ever open thine eyes." God grant that it be not so, but I feel as if it would be so with some of you, unless sovereign and irresistible grace should decide otherwise, and then, to-night, there will be a spot in this house of prayer where a soul will be born to God. What man is he that just now gives his heart to Christ? Are there none of you? Must I go back to my Master with no joyful tidings? Is there no heart here that says: —

> "I'll go to Jesus, though my sins
> Have like a mountain rose;
> I know his courts, I'll enter in
> Whatever may oppose."

Prompt Decision.— Suppose yourself placed in the same position as King Antiochus. When the Roman ambassador met him and asked him whether it was to be peace or war, he said he must have time to consider. The ambassador with his sword drew a circle in the sand. "Give an answer," he said, "before you move out of that circle, or if you step out of it your answer is war." I think there is such a phase in a man's life, when he must give a prompt reply. I know what that answer will be unless God the Holy Ghost makes you give the right one, but you must give it one way or the other, and if the man saith, "No, I will give no answer," yet if he stop beyond that appointed hour, it is war between him and God forever, and the sword shall never be sheathed, nor go back into its scabbard. He hath thrown down the gauntlet, by refusing to give a decisive pledge of obedience. The Lord hath declared eternal war against him; peace shall not be made forever. Before you go farther, which shall it be?

DUTY

Day by Day.— But why is it you will be troubling yourself about the things of to-morrow? The common people say, "Cross a bridge when you come to it." That is good advice. Do the same. When a trouble comes, attack it, and down with it, and master it; but do not begin now to forestall your woes. "Ah! but I have so many," says one. Therefore I say, do not look further before thee than thou needest. "Sufficient unto the day is the *evil* thereof." Do as the brave Grecian did, who, when he defended his country from Persia, did not go into the plains to fight, but stood in the narrow pass of Thermopylæ; there, when the myriads came to him, they had to come one by one, and he felled them to the earth. Had he ventured into the plain he would have been soon

devoured, and his handful would have been melted like a drop of dew in the sea. Stand in the narrow pass of to-day, and fight thy troubles one by one; but do not rush into the plains of to-morrow, for there thou wilt be routed and killed.

Our Duty to Our Neighbor.— An infidel once met a Christian, and said, "I know you do not believe your religion." "Why?" asked the Christian. "Because," said the other, "for years you have passed me on my way to my house of business. You believe, do you not, there is a hell, into which men's spirits are cast?" "Yes, I do," said the Christian. "And you believe that unless I believe in Christ I must be sent there?" "Yes." "You do not, I am sure, because if you did, you must be a most inhuman wretch to pass me, day by day, and never tell me about it or warn me of it."

Stedfast in Duty.—"Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end,"— because there is wondrous grace to be revealed to you by and by. I should like you to act as an American — Colonel Davenport — did upon a certain occasion. One day, many years back, a thick darkness came over the United States. Now and then in London we have dreadfully dark days, for which we can scarcely account, but this was quite a new experience for the New Englanders, and caused a terrible sensation. So exceedingly black was it that the barn-door fowls went to roost in the middle of the day. The darkness grew worse, and people trembled in their houses, declaring that the end of the world was coming. They were all excited and alarmed. One of the houses of legislature adjourned under the belief that the Day of Judgment was come. The other house was sitting, and the blackness was so intense that everybody was awed. A motion was made that they should break up, as the end of the world had certainly arrived. Colonel Daven-

port objected, saying, "The judgment is either approaching or it is not. If it is not, there is no cause for adjourning; and if it is, I choose to be found doing my duty. I wish, therefore, that candles may be brought." Brethren, it is dark; but whatever is going to happen, or whatever is not going to happen, let us be found girded, sober, and hopeful. In these dark political times, these dark religious times, I call for candles, for we mean to go on working.

The Duty at Hand.— Nothing for a Christian to do! You are lazy, sirs; lazy, listless, sluggish, or else you would never raise such a question. It is not, "What should I do," but "Where shall I begin doing it — which is the first point?" And I would say, begin at the point that is nearest to you. So they did when they built the walls of Jerusalem. Every man built opposite to his own house. There, you see, the advantage was he had not to walk two miles to his work at morn and then come back at night. He built opposite to his own house, so he was spared all that trouble. And when he had a little leisure time, when he went to his dinner, he could sit and look at his work, and think how to do it better next time. There was a further advantage in that. Much economy and great benefit would come of it were Christians to work near where they live, and take up that part of Christian service most congenial to their circumstances and to their tastes. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do"— next to thine own door —"do it with all thy might."

EARNESTNESS

Wasted Zeal.— We like to associate with people who have hearts — not dry leather bottles, out of which all the juice has gone; but those who have heart, and soul, and life, and fire, and go. I love to meet with those who

believe in something, and who work under the pressure of their belief, and give their strength to the carrying out of what they believe to be the will of God. It does seem a very great pity that any zeal should be wasted, and that any one full of zeal should yet miss his way. We fear that there are some who will do so. If you want to go to York you may ride very fast south, but you will not get to York with all your speed. Unless you turn your rein towards the north, you may ride a thousand horses to death, and never see the gates of the old city. It is of no use to be zealous if you are zealous in a wrong cause; but when we meet with any who are such, I say that they become peculiarly the object of a Christian's prayers. Pray for the zealous with all your hearts, for it is such a pity that one of them should go astray.

Christian Earnestness.— "Gird up the loins of your mind." My brethren, that certainly teaches us, in the first place, *earnestness*. A man going to work tucks up his sleeves, and tightens his robes. He has something to do which demands all his strength, and, therefore, he cannot afford to have anything hanging loosely about him, to hinder him. We brace ourselves for a supreme effort: and the Christian life is always such. We must always be in earnest if we would be disciples of our earnest Lord.

Refreshed by Enthusiasm.— The chamois-hunter quits his couch long before the sun is up, and climbs the mountains. He watches from the first gray light for the creature which is the object of his pursuit. Ask him how it is when he returns late in the evening that he has had nothing to eat all day long. He answers, "I never thought of it; I saw a chamois on a distant crag and I hastened after it. I leaped the ravines, I climbed the steep faces of the rocks, I sprang down again; I was almost on my prey, but it was gone. I crept up within

range again, holding my breath lest the scent of me should alarm the watchful chamois. I thought of nothing but my sport; and I never knew what hunger meant until my bullet found its mark in the heart of my prey, and I had drawn out my hunting-knife. It was not until I began to lift the game to my shoulder that I bethought me that I had neither eaten nor drunk that day. You understand what this enthusiasm means and how it refreshes the hunter.

Earnestness.— There was a man who strove in the House of Commons for what he thought would be a great boon to seamen, but he could not prevail. At last he broke through all the rules of the house and acted like a fanatic, and when everybody saw that the man was so in earnest that he was ready to faint and die, they said, "We must do something"; and it was done. An enthusiasm which overpowers yourself is likely to overpower others.

EXERCISE

Exercising Our Faith.— Strong faith must always be an exercised faith; and he that dares not exercise the faith he has shall not have more. "Take away from him the one talent and give it to him that hath, because he did not put it out to usury." In Mr. Whitfield's life, you do not often find any complaining of want of faith; or if he did, it was when he only preached nine times a week; he never complained when he preached sixteen times. Read Grimshaw's life: you do not often find him troubled with despondency when he preached twenty-four times in seven days; it was only when he was growing a little idle and only preached twelve times. Keep always at it, and all at it, and there is not much fear of your faith becoming weak. It is with our faith as with boys in the winter time. There they go round the fire, rubbing

and chafing their hands to keep the blood in circulation, and almost fighting each other to see which shall sit on the fire and get warm. At last the father comes, and says, "Boys, this won't do; you will never get warm by these artificial means; run out and do some work." Then they all go out, and they come in again with a ruddy hue in their cheeks, their hands no longer tingle, and they say, "Well, father, we didn't think it half so warm as it is." So must it be with you; you must set to work if you would have your faith grow strong and warm.

Need of Spiritual Exercise.— Some men seem as if they only had to meet one form of trial. They remind me of the Indian Fakir; he holds his arm straight up; that is the triumph of his strength. Now, God does not exercise a believer's limbs till they grow stiff; but he exercises them in every way, that they may become supple, so that, come what may, he is ready to achieve any exploit.

FAITH

Fear Not Faith.— A soldier in the army of the Potomac, of whom I somewhere read, was taken to the rear to die. He was badly wounded; he was also suffering from fever. Some one had told him, just before the fever came on, of a soldier found asleep at his post who was condemned to die. The poor fellow in his delirium imagining that he was that soldier, cried out to the doctor who was attending him, "Sir, I am to be shot to-morrow morning; and as I wish to have all right, I want you to send for the chaplain at once. I want to see him." The doctor, to calm his fears, said, "No, no, you are not to be shot to-morrow morning; it's a mistake." "Oh, but I am," he said; "I know I shall." "But I will be here," said the doctor, "and if any one comes to touch you, I will have him arrested. I will take care you shall not

die." "Is it so, doctor?" said he, in calmer accents, "then you need not send for the chaplain; I shall not want him just yet." So the truth came out that fear, not faith, animated him, though it was but spoken in a feverish dream.

Faith and Joy.— "Is it not surprising," said one, "that God should have heard my prayers, and have been so gracious to me in providence?" "No," said an old saint, whose long experience had taught her more of the Lord, "it does not surprise me, it is just like him, it is his way with his people. Oh, to feel that great mercy is like him; that it is what we should expect of God, that he should give great deliverances, should walk the waters of our griefs, and bid them cease their raging! It is a blessed faith which enables us to recognize Jesus on the waters, and to say, "I know it is Jesus, nobody but Jesus could act so wondrously; I might not have known him if I had seen him working in an ordinary way, or travelling like a common wayfarer, but here amidst extraordinary seasons I expected his help; if I never had seen him before, I expected to see him now; and now I do see him I am not amazed, though I am delighted. I looked for him, and I knew that when the need of him was greatest, his coming would be sure." When faith brightens the eye of hope with the flash of expectation, joy is not far away.

Faith and Healing.— If you believe his word you shall know the sweets of grace. To ask for more evidence first is as though a man should say, "Here is a medicine prepared by a physician of great repute, and it is said to be very powerful for driving out the disease from which I suffer: I will take it as soon as I see that I am improving by its means." The man has lost his reason, has he not? He cannot expect even a partial cure till he has taken the medicine. He cannot expect the result

to come before the cause. You must take the good Physician's medicine as a matter of faith, and afterwards your faith will be increased by the beneficial result. You must believe on the Lord Jesus, because of the witness of God concerning him, for that is all the witness you ought to wish for, and all that God will give you. After you have believed other witnesses will spring up in your soul, as the results of faith, and so your confidence will be strengthened; but just now, beloved, believe in Jesus Christ, and having believed in him you shall know that you are forgiven for his name's sake.

Faith and Feeling.— A certain master had a servant whose mind was very much poisoned against him by slanderous tales. Everything the master did the servant misconstrued, because he considered him to be a tyrant and an oppressor. Now it came to pass that this servant one day learned more concerning his master, and found out that everything he had done was dictated by the most generous motives, and that his master indeed was one of the excellent of the earth. The moment that servant's thoughts of his master changed and he had faith in his goodness, he acted very differently, as you may well conceive; none could be more faithful and diligent than he. Now, we prove that we believe, because we feel towards God so very differently; he is loved in our inmost souls, and we delight to serve him. This would have been utterly impossible if we had not been changed in our feelings toward him by being led to trust him.

Unknown Heroes of Faith.— Think not that Luther was the only man that wrought the Reformation. There were hundreds who sighed and cried in secret in the cottages of the Black Forest, in the homes of Germany, and on the hills of Switzerland. There were hearts breaking for the Lord's appearing in strange places, they might have been found in the palaces of Spain, in the dungeons

of the Inquisition, among the canals of Holland, and the green lanes of England. Women, as they hid their Bibles, lest their lives should be forfeited, cried out in spirit, "O God, how long?"

The Riches of Christian Faith.— This week I had my faith much strengthened in visiting a sick woman. I would fain change places with her. Glad enough should I be to lie upon that sick bed and die in her room; for though she has been long on the borders of the grave, and knows it,— knows that each hour may probably be the last, her joy is so great, her bliss is so abundant, that you have only to speak with her and her joy overflows. She said to me, "I prayed that if God would spare me, he would give me one soul, and he has given me five converts while I have been on this bed;" and I did not wonder at it, as I saw the five dear friends sitting in the room; I did not wonder at it — it was enough to make one a Christian to see her joy and her peace, and hear her talk so confidently about the time when she should see her Lord and be in his embrace forever. "Ah!" says the devil to the Christian, "I will give you so much if you sin." Our reply is, "What could you give me compared with my inheritance? O fiend, thou bringest me counterfeit riches, but I can count down ten thousand times as much in real solid gold! Thou profferest me thy paste gems, but here are diamonds and pearls of the first water and of the rarest value!

Superficial Unbelief.— Addison tells us of a man who, on board ship in a storm, knelt down to pray, and expressed his firm belief in a God. When he got ashore some one laughed at him for it, and he challenged the man to a duel. They fought together, and the atheist fell wounded. When the blood was flowing he believed there was a God, and he began to cry to God with all his might to save him. The physician bound up the wound. The man

put the question to him, "Is it mortal?" "No," he says: "it is only a flesh wound." Then said the man, "There is no God: I am a thorough atheist." He believed in God when he thought he was going to die; the moment he felt himself better, he returned to his unbelief.

Faith and Reason.— Once Reason came along, and heard a man cry, "I am guilty, guilty," She stopped, and said, "The man is guilty; God condemns the guilty, therefore this man will be condemned." She went away — left the man condemned and ruined, and quivering with fear. Faith came and heard the self-same cry, rendered more bitter by the cruel syllogism of Reason. Faith stopped: she said, "The man is guilty; Christ died for the guilty; the man will be saved;" and her logic was right; the man lifted up his head, and rejoiced. Reason came one day, and saw a man naked, and she said, "He hath not on a wedding garment; can naked souls appear before the bar of God? Should they have a place at the supper of the Lamb? The man is naked; he must be cast out, for naked ones cannot enter heaven!" Then Faith came by, and said, "The man is naked; Christ wrought a robe of righteousness; he must have made it for the naked; he would not have made it for those who have a robe of their own. The robe is for the naked man, and he shall stand in it before God." And her logic was right and just. The other might seem strictly according to rule, but this was better still. Reason one day heard a man say that he was very good and righteous. She saw him go up to the temple, and heard him pray, "Lord, I thank thee that I am not as other men." Said Reason, "That man is better than others, and he will be accepted." But she argued wrongly; for, lo! he went out, and a poor sinner by his side, who could only say, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," went down to his house justified, while

the proud Pharisee went on his way disregarded. The logic of faith is to argue white from black, whereas the logic of reason argues white from white. Luther says, "Once upon a time the devil came to me, and said, 'Martin Luther, you are a great sinner, and you will be damned.' 'Stop, stop,' said I, 'one thing at a time; I am a great sinner, it is true, though you have no right to tell me of it. I confess it; what next?' 'Therefore you will be damned.' 'That is not good reasoning. It is true I am a great sinner, but it is written "Jesus Christ came to save sinners;" therefore I shall be saved. Now go your way.' So I cut the devil off with his own sword, and he went away mourning, because he could not cast me down by calling me a sinner."

Danger of Unbelief.— When our sappers and miners went to work around Sebastopol, they could not work in front of the walls, if they had not something to keep off the shots; so they raised earth-works, behind which they could do what they pleased. So with the ungodly man. The devil gives him unbelief: he thus puts up an earth-work, and finds refuge behind it. Ah, sinners! when once the Holy Ghost knocks down your unbelief; when once he brings home the truth in demonstration and in power, how the law will work upon your soul. If man did but believe that the law is holy, that the commandments are holy, just, and good, how he would be shaken over hell's mouth; there would be no sitting and sleeping in God's house; no careless hearers; no going away and straightway forgetting what manner of men ye are. Oh! once get rid of unbelief, how would every ball from the batteries of the law fall upon the sinner; and the slain of the Lord would be many.

Faith Awakened Through God's Kindness.— I remember an old experimental Christian speaking about the great pillars of our faith; he was a sailor; we were then on

board ship, and there were sundry huge posts on the shore, to which the ships were usually fastened, by throwing a cable over them. After I had told him a great many promises, he said, "I know they are good strong promises, but I can not get near enough to shore to throw my cable around them; that is the difficulty."

Now, it often happens that God's past mercies and loving kindnesses would be good sure posts to hold on to, but we have not got faith enough to throw our cable round them, and so we go slipping down the stream of unbelief, because we can not stay ourselves by our former mercies. I will, however, give you something that I think you can throw your cable over. If God has never been kind to you, one thing you surely know, and that is, he has been kind to others.

"Little Faith."— There are some Christians who never get out of little faith all the while they are here. You notice in John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," how many Little-faith's he mentions. There is our old friend Ready-to-halt, who went all the way to the celestial city on crutches, but left them when he went into the river Jordan. Then there is little Feeble-mind, who carried his feeble mind with him all the way to the banks of the river and then left it, and ordered it to be buried in a dunghill that none might inherit it. Then there is Mr. Fearing, too, who used to stumble over a straw, and was always frightened if he saw a drop of rain, because he thought the floods of heaven were let loose upon him. And you remember Mr. Despondency and Miss Much-afraid, who were so long locked up in the dungeon of Giant Despair that they were almost starved to death, and there was little left of them but skin and bone; and poor Mr. Feeble-mind, who had been taken into the cave of Giant Slay-good who was about to eat him, when Great-heart came to his deliverance. John Bunyan was

a very wise man. He has put a great many of those characters in his book, because there are a great many of them. He has not left us with one Mr. Ready-to-halt, but he has given us seven or eight graphic characters, because he himself in his own time had been one of them, and he had known many others who had walked in the same path.

A Sham Faith.— I know a man who walks seven miles every Sabbath to hear the gospel preached at a certain place — a place where they preach *the* gospel. You know that very particular, superfine sort — *the* gospel, a gospel, the spirit of which consists in bad temper, carnal security, arrogance, and a seared conscience. But this man was one day met by a friend, who said to him, "Where is your wife?" "*Wife?*" said he to him. "What! does she not come with you?" "O! no," said the man; "she never goes anywhere." "Well, but," said he, "don't you try to get her to go, and the children?" "No; the fact of it is, I think, if I look to myself, that is quite enough." "Well," said the other, "and you believe that you are God's elect, do you?" "Yes." "Well, then," said the other, "I don't think you are, because you are worse than a heathen man and a publican, for you don't care for your own household; therefore I don't think you give much evidence of being God's elect, for they love their fellow-creatures." So sure as our faith is real, it will want to bring others in.

The Rope of Faith.— The stupendous falls of Niagara have been spoken of in every part of the world; but while they are marvelous to hear of, and wonderful as a spectacle, they have been very destructive to human life, when by accident any have been carried down the cataract. Some years ago two men, a bargeman and a collier, were in a boat, and found themselves unable to manage it, it being carried so swiftly down the current that they must both

inevitably be borne down and dashed to pieces. Persons on the shore saw them, but were unable to do much for their rescue. At last, however, one man was saved by floating a rope to him, which he grasped. The same instant that the rope came into his hand a log floated by the other man. The thoughtless and confused bargeman instead of seizing the rope laid hold on the log. It was a fatal mistake; they were both in imminent peril, but the one was drawn to shore because he had a connection with the people on the land, whilst the other, clinging to the log, was borne irresistibly along and never heard of afterward. Do you not see that here is a practical illustration? Faith is a connection with Christ. Christ is on the shore, so to speak, holding the rope of faith, and if we lay hold of it with the hand of our confidence he pulls us to shore; but our good works, having no connection with Christ, are drifted along down the gulf of fell despair. Grapple them as tightly as we may, even with hooks of steel, they can not with all our efforts avail us in the least degree.

Solid Footing for Faith.— Mr. Innis, a great Scotch minister, once visited an infidel who was dying. When he came to him the first time, he said, "Mr. Innis, I am relying on the mercy of God; God is merciful, and he will never damn a man for ever." When he got worse and was nearer death, Mr. Innis went to him again, and he said, "O! Mr. Innis, my hope is gone; for I have been thinking, if God be merciful, God is just too; and what if, instead of being merciful to me, he should be just to me? What would then become of me? I must give up my hope in the mere mercy of God; tell me how to be saved!" Mr. Innis told him that Christ had died in the stead of all believers — that God could be just, and yet the justifier through the death of Christ. "Ah!" said he, "Mr. Innis, there is something solid in that;

I can rest on that; I can not rest on anything else;" and it is a remarkable fact that none of us ever met with a man who thought he had his sins forgiven unless it was through the blood of Christ.

The Leap of Faith.— A boy at sea, who was very fond of climbing to the mast-head, one day climbed to the main-truck, and could not get down again. The sea was very rough, and it was seen that in a little while the boy would fall on the deck, and be dashed to pieces. His father saw but one way of saving his life. Seizing a speaking-trumpet, he cried out, "Boy, the next time the ship lurches, you fall into the sea." The next time the ship lurched the boy looked down, and, not much liking the idea of throwing himself into the sea, still held to the mast. The father, who saw that the boy's strength would soon fail him, took a gun in his hand, and cried out, "Boy, if you do not drop into the sea the next time the ship lurches, I'll shoot you!" The boy knew his father meant it, and the next time the ship lurched he leaped into the sea. It seemed like certain destruction, but out went a dozen brawny arms, and he was saved. The sinner, in the midst of the storm, thinks he must cling to the mast of his good works, and so be saved. Says the gospel, "Let go your good works, and drop into the ocean of God's love." "No," says the sinner, "it is a long way between me and God's love; I must perish if I trust to that; I must have some other reliance." "If you have any other reliance than that, you are lost." Then comes the thundering law, and declares to the sinner, that unless he gives up every dependence, he will be lost. And then comes the happy moment, when the sinner says, "Dear Lord, I give up all my dependence, and cast myself on thee; I take thee, Jesus, to be my one object in life, my only trust, the refuge, the only refuge I have, for my soul."

Confidence and Heroism.— A holy confidence in the divine purpose instead of making men grow stolid and idle may prove to be one of the mightiest impulses to the heroic life. Cromwell's Ironsides to a man believed in the everlasting purpose, therefore they were invincible, for no fear ever breathed upon them. Tho the hosts of the tyrant may be innumerable, yet with the war cry, "The Lord of hosts is with us," we will ride forth conquering and to conquer. Settle it in your mind that the Lord has called you to the work, and then advance without question or fear.

Pioneers of Faith.— I greatly esteem in my own mind those first believers who were not borne in by the throng of others, but went forward alone. I compare them to the first navigators upon an untried sea; the men who first sailed out of sight of shore, greatly venturing. To be first in perceiving that Jesus of Nazareth was the Anointed of the Lord was no mean thing, for none of the princes of this world had any idea of that great fact. These were in truth the "men of light and leading," the foremost minds of their age, peasants and fishermen tho they were. These were the first swallows heralding a glorious summer-tide. These were the first song-birds waking the morning to behold the newly risen sun. It is a patent of nobility to be numbered with these.

Faith Honored.— A slaveholding American, on one occasion, buying a slave, said to the person of whom he was purchasing him, "Tell me honestly what are his faults?" Said the seller: "He has no faults, that I am aware of, but one: that one fault is, he will pray."— "Ah!" said the purchaser, "I don't like that; but I know something that will cure him of it pretty soon." So, the next night, Cuffey was surprised by his master in the plantation while in earnest prayer, praying for

his new master, and his master's wife and family. The man stood and listened, but said nothing at the time; but the next morning he called Cuffey, and said, "I do not want to quarrel with you, my man, but I'll have no praying on my premises: so you just drop it."—"Massa," said he, "me canna leave off praying; me must pray."—"I'll teach you to pray, if you are going to keep on at it."—"Massa, me must keep on."—"Well, then, I'll give you five-and-twenty lashes a day till you leave off."—"Massa, if you give me fifty, I must pray."—"If that's the way you are saucy to your master, you shall have it directly." So, tying him up, he gave him five-and-twenty lashes, and asked him if he would pray again. "Yes, massa, me must pray always; me canna leave off." The master looked astonished; he could not understand how a poor saint could keep on praying, when it seemed to do no good, but only brought persecution upon him. He told his wife of it. His wife said: "Why can't you let the poor man pray? He does his work very well; you and I do not care about praying, but there's no harm in letting him pray, if he gets on with his work."—"But I don't like it," said the master, "he almost frightened me to death. You should see how he looked at me."—"Was he angry?"—"No, I should not have minded that; but after I had beaten him, he looked at me with tears in his eyes, as if he pitied me more than himself." That night the master could not sleep; he tossed to and fro on his bed; his sins were brought to his remembrance; he remembered he had persecuted a saint of God. Rising in his bed, he said, "Wife, will you pray for me?"—"I never prayed in my life," said she, "I cannot pray for you." "I am lost," he said, "if somebody does not pray for me; I cannot pray for myself."—"I don't know any one on the estate that knows how to pray, except Cuffey," said his wife. The bell was rung,

and Cuffey was brought in. Taking hold of his black servant's hand, the master said, "Cuffey, can you pray for your master?"—"Massa," said he, "me been praying for you eber since you flogged me, and me mean to pray always for you." Down went Cuffey on his knees, and poured out his soul in tears, and both husband and wife were converted. That negro could not have done this without faith. Without faith he would have gone away directly, and said, "Massa, me leave off praying; me no like de white man's whip." But because he persevered through his faith, the Lord honored him, and gave him his master's soul for his hire.

Obedience of Faith.— The ship is on fire; the bales of cotton are pouring forth a black, horrible smoke; passengers and crew are in extreme danger, but a capable captain is in command, and he says to those around him, "If you will behave yourselves, I think I shall be able to effect the escape of you all." Now, if they trust in the captain they will do precisely as he orders. No sailor or engineer will refuse to work the pumps, or to prepare the boats, neither will any passenger disobey rule. In proportion to their confidence in their leader will be the alacrity with which they obey him at once. They believe his orders to be wise, and so they keep to them. Neither their fear, nor their rashness, will lead them to rush to and fro contrary to his bidding if they have a firm trust in him. When the boats are lowered, and are brought one by one to the ship's side, those who are to fill them wait till their turns come, in firm reliance upon the captain's impartiality and prudence. They will get into the boats or they will wait on board, for they consider that his orders are dictated by a better judgment than their own. So far as each man and each woman firmly believes in the superior officer, discipline will be maintained. Do you not see this?

Obedience is the necessary outcome of true and real faith, and there is no trust where there is no obedience. Some of you fancy that you are to trust Christ, and then do what you like. You believe a lie, for such is not the teaching of God's word. The faith which saves is a faith which obeys.

Faith in Tribulation.— Oh! what a precious thing faith is, when we are enabled to believe our God, and how easy then it is to endure and to surmount all trouble. Hear the old man in the garret, with a crust of bread and a cup of cold water. Sickness has confined him these years within that narrow room. He is too poor to maintain an attendant. Some woman comes in to look to him in the morning and in the evening, and there he sits, in the depths of poverty. And you will suppose he sits and groans. No, brethren; he may sometimes groan when the body is weak, but usually he sits and sings; and when the visitor climbs the creaking staircase of that old house, where human beings scarcely ought to be allowed to live; and when he goes into that poor cramped up room that is more fit to accommodate swine than men, he sits down upon that bottomless chair, and when he has seated himself as well as he can upon the four cross pieces of it he begins to talk to him, and he finds him full of heaven. "Oh! sir," he says, "my God is very kind to me." Propped up he is with pillows, and full of pain in every member of his body, but he says, "Blessed be his name, he has not left me. Oh! sir, I have enjoyed more peace and happiness in this room, out of which I have not gone for years,"— (the case is real that I am now describing) "I have enjoyed more happiness here than I ever did in all my life. My pains are great, sir, but they will not be for long; I am going home soon."

FORGIVENESS

A Sure Pardon.— In the reign of King George the Third, the son of a member of this church lay under sentence of death for forgery. My predecessor, Dr. Rippon, after incredible exertions, obtained a promise that his sentence should be remitted. By a singular occurrence, the present senior deacon — then a young man — learned from the governor of the jail that the reprieve had not been received; and the unhappy prisoner would have been executed the next morning, had not Dr. Rippon gone post-haste to Windsor, obtained an interview with the king in his bedchamber, and received from the monarch's own hand a copy of that reprieve which had been negligently put aside by a thoughtless speed.

"I charge you, doctor," said his majesty, to make good speed." "Trust me, sire, for that," responded your old pastor, and he returned to London in time, just in time, and only just in time, for the prisoner was being marched with many others on to the scaffold. Ay, that pardon might have been given, and yet the man might have been executed if it had not been effectually carried out. But, blessed be God, our non-condemnation is an effectual thing. It is not a matter of letter, it is a matter of fact. Ah, poor souls, you know that condemnation is a matter of fact.

When you and I suffered in our souls, and were brought under the heavy hand of the law, we felt that its curses were no mock thunders like the wrath of the Vatican, but they were real; we felt that the anger of God was indeed a thing to tremble at; a real substantial fact. Now, just as real as the condemnation which Justice brings, just so real is the justification which mercy bestows.

A Free Pardon.— A prisoner was taken out to die, and as he rode along in the death cart his heart was heavy at the thought of death, and none could cheer him of all the throng. The gallows-tree was in sight, and this blotted out the sun for him. But lo, his prince came riding up in hot haste, bearing a free pardon. Then the man opened his eyes, and, as tho he had risen from the dead, he returned to happy consciousness. The sight of his prince had chased all gloom away. He declared that he had never seen a fairer countenance in all his days; and when he read his pardon he vowed that no poetry should ever be dearer to his heart than those few lines of sovereign grace. Friends, I remember well when I was in that death-cart, and Jesus came to me with pardon. Death and hell were before me; but I rejoiced exceedingly when I saw the nailprints in his hands and feet, and the wound in his side. When he said, "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee," I thought I never saw such loveliness before, and never heard such music in all my days. Nay, it was not mere thought, I am sure my judgment was right. Eternity itself shall never disclose anything to me more sweet. My pardoning Lord hath no peer nor rival. Oh, what a Christ is he who appeared to me, a guilty, condemned sinner, on the way to hell! Blessed be his name, he bore on the tree my curse, and shame, and death and I am free.

The Returning Prodigal.— Picture the case of the prodigal son when he went home. Suppose when he reached the house the elder brother had come to meet him. I must take a supposition that the elder brother had sweetened himself, and made himself amiable; and then I hear say, "Come in, brother, welcome home!" But I see the returning one stand there with the tears in his eyes, and I hear him lament "I want to see my father. I must tell

him that I have sinned and done evil in his sight." An old servant whispers, "Master John, I am glad to see you back. Be happy, for all the servants are rejoiced to hear the sound of your voice. It is true your father will not see you, but he has ordered the fatted calf to be killed for you, and here is the best robe, and a ring, and shoes for your feet, and we are told to put them upon you." All this would not content the poor penitent. I think I hear him cry —"I do not despise anything my father gives me, for I am not worthy to be as his hired servant; but what is all this unless I see *his* face, and know that he forgives me? There is no taste in the feast, no glitter in the ring, no fitness in the shoes, no beauty in the robe unless I can see my father and can be reconciled to him." Do you not see that in the case of the prodigal son the great matter was to get his head into his father's bosom, and there to sob out "Father, I have sinned?" The one thing needful was the kiss of free forgiveness, the touch of those dear, warm, loving lips, which said, "My dear child, I love you, and your faults are blotted out." That was the thing that gave his soul rest and perfect peace; and this is the mystery we come to preach to you — God himself drawing near to you in Christ Jesus, and out of His great beneficence forgiving you all trespasses.

The Forgiveness of God.— Fleming tells us in a book of his that a great culprit had been condemned to be hanged at Ayr. He had been a very great offender, but, while he lay in prison, God granted him repentance, and he was heard to say continually as they took him to the scaffold, "Oh! but he's a great forgiver! Oh! but he's a great forgiver!" and I have often felt as if I could stand and cry, yea, even dance with delight and say it, "Oh, but he's a great forgiver! Oh! but he's a great forgiver!"

Christ's Instant Pardon.— The Emperor of Germany, in the olden times when popes were popes, had offended his Unholiness, and before he could be restored to favor he had to stand for three days (I think it was) outside the castle gate, in the deep snow, in the depth of winter, and do penance. I have seen, myself, in Rome and elsewhere, outside of the older churches, places uncovered and exposed to wind and rain, to the heat of summer and the frost of winter, where backsliders were made to stand, sometimes for years even, before they were restored, if they had committed some offence against ecclesiastical statutes. You will sometimes see in old country churches of England little windows that run slanting and just look towards the communion table through which poor offenders who professed repentance, after some months of standing in the churchyard, or perhaps outside of it, were at last allowed to take a peep at the altar, at the expiration of their weary term of penance. All this is contrary to the spirit of the gospel, for the spirit of the gospel is, "Come now, and let us reason together; tho thy sins be as scarlet, they shall be as wool." The spirit of my text is "Kiss the Son now;" and that is all. Tho those lips were once blaspheming, let them kiss the Son. Tho those lips have uttered high words and proud words, or perhaps lying and lascivious words, "Kiss the Son." Bow down at those dear pierced feet, and trust Emmanuel, and own yourself his servant, and you shall be forgiven — forgiven at once, without delay — and this night you shall be accepted in Christ.

GOD

Knowing God.— We have heard also of Juggernauth, and of the thousand and millions of gods of Hindustan, but we have no acquaintance with them. I have felt thankful when I have seen likenesses of Krishna and Siva

that they were no relations of mine. There is one god with an elephant's head, and another god with a cat's head: I am delighted to think that I never was on speaking terms with such monsters, and could never call them mine. If they be gods to others they are not so to us: we know them not, their names we despise, and their pretensions we detest. But, brethren, we know that we know our God.

For His Son's Sake.— There has been a war, and a wounded soldier comes home, and he goes to the house of a father and mother who have a son out in the army, and he inquires, "Does so-and-so live here?" "Yes." "Can I see him?" "Yes." "I have a letter from your son, whom I left in the army, he was my dear comrade." "Are you sure you have such a letter?" The man looks disreputable, and his garments are torn, and he is evidently very poor, but he replies, "Yes, I have a letter from your son." He puts his hands into his pockets, and he cannot find it. The master of the house is angry, and says, "It is of no use your coming here with this tale, you are deceiving me." He fumbles still in his pockets, and at last he brings it out. Yes, there is the token, the father knows the handwriting of his dear boy. The letter says, "Father, this is a choice companion of mine, and I want you, when he reaches home, to treat him kindly for my sake. Tell mother that anything she does for him shall be the same as if she had done it to her own boy." See how well he is received at sight of that token, and even so when we present the blood-mark, we say to the Lord, "There is the token that we are Jesus' friends," and the Lord does not look at the rags in which our poor nature is arrayed, but he looks at the token of his own Son's blood and accepts us for his sake. What surer and more suggestive token could we desire? When cleansed in the blood of Jesus

we are comely with his comeliness, and dear to the heart of God for his Son's sake.

The Love of God.— In the French Revolution, there was a young man condemned to the guillotine, and shut up in one of the prisons. He was greatly loved by many, but there was one who loved him more than all put together. How know we this? It was his own father; and the love he bore his son was proved in this way: when the lists were called, the father, whose name was exactly the same as his son's, answered to the name, and the father rode in the gloomy tumbril out to the place of execution, and his head rolled beneath the axe instead of his son's, a victim to mighty love. See here an image of the love of Christ to sinners; for thus Jesus died for the ungodly, viewed as such. If they had not been ungodly, neither they nor he had needed to have died; if they had not sinned, there would have been no need for a suffering Savior, but Jesus proved his boundless love "in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Your name was in the condemned list, my fellow-sinner, but, if you believe in Jesus, you shall find that your name is there no longer, for Christ's name is put in your stead, and you shall learn that he suffered for you, the just for the unjust, that he might bring you to God. Is not this the greatest wonder of divine love, that it should be set upon us *as sinners?* I can understand God's loving reformed sinners, and repenting sinners; but here is the glory of it, "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners — *yet sinners!* — Christ died for us."

God Like a Mother.— It little matters where you seek the Lord. He will be sure to see you; and even if it be in the crowded street of Cheapside of Cornhill, if your soul is in prayer, all the din of noisy London cannot stop the prayer from reaching the ear of God. You

know, mothers, how quick you are of a night to hear your children if they are ill. If you had a nurse, she might slumber on; but as for you, with little Jane up stairs sick, if you do fall asleep, the faintest noise awakes you; yet you are not one-half so wakeful as God is; for he neither slumbers nor sleeps. When your heart begins to say, "My God, my God, I would be reconciled; my Lord, I would be cleansed," the Lord is waiting to be gracious. Before you call, God hears you, for he is a God ready to pardon.

A Father's Heart.— When King Henry II., in the ages gone by, was provoked to take up arms against his ungrateful and rebellious son, he besieged him in one of the French towns, and the son, being near unto death, desired to see his father and confess his wrongdoing; but the stern old sire refused to look the rebel in the face. The young man, being sorely troubled in his conscience, said to those about him, "I am dying; take me from my bed, and let me lie in sackcloth and ashes, in token of my sorrow for my ingratitude to my father." Thus he died, and when the tidings came to the old man outside the walls, that his boy had died in ashes, repentant for his rebellion, he threw himself upon the earth, like another David, and said, "Would God I had died for him." The thought of his boy's broken heart touched the heart of the father. If ye, being evil, are overcome by your children's tears, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven find in your bemoanings and confessions an argument for the display of his pardoning love through Christ Jesus our Lord.

God Ever Present.— When Her Majesty, some months ago, heard of the desolation which had been caused by an accident in the pits, her tender heart hastened to the relief of the widow and the fatherless, but at the moment of the calamity she was not on the spot in person; she

could not be in the pit to hear the groans and sustain the faith of the dying, nay she could not be in the cottage to mark the tear of the widow and to cheer her with heavenly promises; but our God is on the spot where calamity occurs, for in him we live and move and have our being. He is the greatest of comforters, and he is also the most approachable. He is "a very present help in time of trouble."

God's Tenderness.— When the King of Navarre was fighting for his throne, the writer who hymns the battle, says —

"He looked upon the foemen, and his glance was stern and high;
He looked upon his people, and the tear was in his eye."

And when he saw some of the French in arms against him —

"Then out spoke gentle Henry, No Frenchman is my foe,
Down, down, with every foreigner, but let your brethren go."

The king had an eye to his people even when they were in rebellion against him, and he had a different thought towards them from what he had towards others. "Let them go," he seemed to say, "they are my people." So, mark you, in the great battles and strifes of this world, when God lets loose the dread artillery of heaven, his glance is stern upon his enemies, but the tear is in his eye towards his people. He is always tender towards them. "Spare my people," saith he, and the angels interpose lest these chosen ones should dash their feet against a stone.

Responsibility to God.— That was grand of Latimer, when he preached before Henry VIII. He had greatly displeased his majesty by his boldness in a sermon preached before the king, and was ordered to preach again on the

following Sabbath, and to make an apology for the offence he had given. After reading his text, the bishop thus began his sermon: "Hugh Latimer, dost thou know before whom thou art this day to speak? To the high and mighty monarch, the king's most excellent majesty, who can take away thy life if thou offendest; therefore, take heed that thou speakest not a word that may displease. But then consider well, Hugh, does thou not know from whence thou comest — upon whose message thou art sent? Even by the great and mighty God, who is all-present, and who beholdeth all thy ways, and who is able to cast thy soul into hell! Therefore, take care that thou deliverest thy message faithfully."

God's Call.— Standing one day in the court-house, some witness was required, I forget his name; it may have been Brown, for instance; in one moment the name was announced, "Brown, Samuel Brown." By and by twenty others take up the cry, "Samuel Brown, Samuel Brown." There was seen a man pushing his way through. "Make room," said he, "make room, his honor calls me," and tho there were many in his path, they gave way, because his being called was a sufficient command for them, not to hinder him, but to let him come. And now, soul, if thou be a willing sinner, who why name is not mentioned — if thou be a willing sinner, thou art as truly called as tho thou wert called by name, and therefore push through thy fears. Make room, and come; they that would stop thee are cowards. *He* has said "Let him come," and they cannot keep you back; Jehovah has said, "Let him come," and it is yours now to say, "I will come." There is nothing that shall hinder me, I will push through everything and

> "To the gracious King approach,
> Whose sceptre mercy gives."

God More Careful Than a Mother.— Look at the mother, how careful she is. If her child have a little cough, she notices it: the slightest weakness is sure to be observed. She has watched all its motions anxiously, to see whether it walked right, whether all its limbs were sound, and whether it had the use of all its powers in perfection; but she has never thought of numbering the hairs of her child's head, and the absence of one or two of them would give her no great concern. But our God is more careful of us, even than a mother with her child — so careful that he numbers the hairs of our head. How safe are we, then, beneath the hand of God!

Helpless Without God.— I find faith just the easiest thing in the world when there is nothing to believe; but when I have room and exercise for my faith, then I do not find I have so much strength to accomplish it. Talking one day with a countryman, he used this figure: "In the middle of winter I sometimes think how well I could mow; and in early spring I think, oh! how I would like to reap; I feel just ready for it; but when mowing time comes, and when reaping time comes, I find I have not strength to spare." So when you have no troubles, couldn't you mow them down at once? When you have no work to do, couldn't you do it? But when work and trouble come you find how difficult it is. Many Christians are like the stag, who talked to itself, and said, "Why should I run away from the dogs? Look what a fine pair of horns I've got, and look what heels I've got, too; I might do these hounds some mischief. Why not let me stand and show them what I can do with my antlers? I can keep off any quantity of dogs." No sooner did the dogs bark, than off the stag went. So with us. "Let sin arise," we say, "we will soon rip it up, and destroy it; let trouble come, we will soon get over it; but when sin and trouble come, we then find

what our weakness is. Then we have to cry for the help of the Spirit; and through him we can do all things, tho without him we can do nothing at all.

Depth of a Father's Love.— There was a little boy at the corner of the table, and his father asked him, "Why does your father love you, John?" Said the dear little lad, very prettily, "Because I'm a good boy." "Yes," said the father, "he would not love you if you were not a good boy." I turned to the good father and remarked that I was not quite sure about the truth of the last remark, for I believed he would love him if he were ever so bad. "Well," he said, "I think I should." And said a minister at the table, "I had an instance of that yesterday. I stepped into the house of a woman who had a son transported for life, and she was as full of her son Richard as if he had been prime minister, or had been her most faithful and dutiful son."

God Our Deliverer.— If God does not deliver his servants at one time as well as another, he has not kept his promise. For a man of truth is always true, and a promise once given always stands. A promise cannot be broken now and then, and yet the honor of the person giving it be maintained by his keeping it at other times. The word of a true man stands always good: it is good *now*. This is logic, bitter logic, cold steel logic, logic which seems to cut right down your backbone and cleave your chine. "He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him now." Yet this hard logic can be turned to comfort. I told you a story the other day of the brother in Guy's Hospital to whom the doctors said he must undergo an operation which was extremely dangerous. They gave him a week to consider whether he would submit to it. He was troubled for his young wife and children, and for his work for the Lord. A friend left a bunch of flowers for him, with this verse

as its motto, "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now." "Yes," he thought, "*now*." In prayer he cast himself upon the Lord, and felt in his heart, "Come on, doctors, I am ready for you." When the next morning came, he refused to take chloroform, for he desired to go to heaven in his senses. He bore the operation manfully, and he is yet alive.

God Our Defender.— Contend not with a man who has God at his back. Years ago, the Mentonese desired to break away from the dominion of the Prince of Monaco. They therefore drove out his agent. The prince came with his army, not a very great one, it is true, but still formidable to the Mentonese. I know not what the high and mighty princeling was not going to do; but news came that the King of Sardinia was coming up in the rear to help the Mentonese, and therefore his lordship of Monaco very prudently retired to his own rock. When a believer stands out against evil he may be sure that the lord of hosts will not be far away. The enemy shall hear the dash of his horse-hoof and the blast of his trumpet, and shall flee before him. Wherefore be of good courage, and compel the world to say of you, "He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him."

The Father's Love.— Your dear children do not trouble themselves much, do they? If they have a want, they go to father; if they are puzzled, they ask father; if they are ill-treated, they appeal to father. If but a thorn is in their finger, they run to mother for relief. Be it little or great, the child's sorrow is the parent's care. This makes a child's life easy: it would make ours easy if we would but act as children towards God. Let us imitate the Elder Brother, and when we, too, are in our Gethsemane, let us, as he did, continue to cry, "My Father, My Father." This is a better defence than shield or sword.

God's Consideration.— A person may happen to do you a good turn; but if you are sure that he did it by accident, or with no more thought than that wherewith a passing stranger throws a penny to a beggar, you are not impressed with gratitude. But when the action of your friend is the result of earnest deliberation, and you see that he acts in the tenderest regard to your welfare, you are are far more thankful: traces of anxiety to do you good are very pleasant. Have I not heard persons say, "It was so kind and so thoughtful of him!" Do you not notice that men value kindly thought, and set great store by tender consideration! Remember, then, that there is never a thoughtless action on the part of God. His mind goes with his hand: his heart is in his acts. He thinks so much of his people, that the very hairs of their heads are all numbered: he thinks not only of the great thing, but of all the little things which are incidental to the great thing; as the hairs are to the head. Every affliction is timed and measured, and every comfort is sent with a loving thoughtfulness which makes it precious in a sevenfold degree. O believer, the great thoughtfulness of the divine mind is exercised towards you, the chosen of the Lord.

God's Pity.— The old father had a very long range of eyesight; and tho the prodigal could not see him in the distance, he could see the prodigal. And the father's first thought when he saw him was this —"O my poor son, O my poor boy! that ever he should have brought himself into such a state as this!" He looked through his telescope of love, and he saw him, and said, "Ah! he did not go out of my house in such trim as that. Poor creature, his feet are bleeding; he has come a long way, I'll be bound. Look at his face, he doesn't look like the same boy he was when he left me. His eye that was so bright, is now sunken in its socket; his cheeks that once stood

out with fatness, have now become hollow with famine. Poor wretch, I can tell all his bones, he is so emaciated." Instead of feeling any anger in his heart, he felt just the contrary; he felt such pity for his poor son. And so the Lord feels for you.

God's Fatherhood.— A child may be happy at school, but he longs for the holidays. Is it merely to escape his lessons? Ah, no! Ask him, and he will tell you. "I want to go home to see my father." The same is equally true, and possibly more so, if we include the feminine form of parentage. What a home-cry is that of "mother!" The sight of that dear face has been longed and hungered for by many a child when far away. Mother or father, which you will; they are blended in the great Fatherhood of God. Let it but be said that any one has gone to his father, and no further question is asked as to the right of his going thither. To the father belongs the first possession of the child; should he not have his own child at home? The Savior wipes our tears away with a handkerchief which is marked in the corner with this word —"Father."

At Home in God's Arms.— I had a great sorrow yesterday of speaking to a dear brother whom I had hoped would be spared for great usefulness in a distant land; but he had just received from the doctor's examination the solemn information that he was hopelessly diseased. We proposed that he should go to the seaside; but I saw which way his heart went. He thought of his wife and his habitation, and he said, "Let me go home. If I must die, let it be in my own house." He spoke as I should have done in like case. At home one might not have all the skill of the hospital at command; but one would be sure of a certain priceless tenderness which no nurse can rival. Lord, thou hast been my dwelling-place: I will die in thy arms. When I am sick and

weary there is none like thee, my God! When my heart breaks and all things seem lost, none can bind it up but thee, my God!

God's Defence of His Children.— A man is generally much grieved with any one who injures his children. I have known a man behave patiently to his neighbors, and put up with a great deal from them; but when one of them has struck his child I have seen him incensed to the last degree. He has said, "I cannot stand *that,* I will not look on and see my own children ill-used." The Lord says, "He that touches you touches the apple of my eye." Jesus rises from his throne in glory and stands up indignantly while his servant Stephen is being stoned. If I had no other amusement whatever, I would not for merriment sake mock the people of God; for it will go hard with those who make unhallowed mirth out of the saints of the Most High.

The Patience of God.— They said of Cranmer that he was more than ready to forgive, for he always returned good for evil. It was a common saying, "Do my Lord of Canterbury an ill turn, and he will be your friend as long as you live." That was fine; but my lord of Canterbury was nothing in gentleness compared with the Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The holy Leighton, also was of such a gentle spirit that one day when he went out for a walk and came back he could not get into his own house, for it was locked up, and his servant had gone away for a day's fishing without leave or notice. All the good man said was, "John, next time you go fishing, please to let me know, or at least leave me the key, so that I may open the door." That was all. If even men have come up to such a degree of patience, much more will you find longsuffering in God.

Imitating God.— "Be ye imitators of God, as dear children:" not as slaves might imitate their master — unwillingly, dreading the crack of his whip; but loving, willing imitators, such as children are. You do not urge your children to imitate you; they do this even in their games. See how the boy rides his wooden horse, and the girl imitates her nurse. You see the minister's little boy trying to preach like his father; and you all remember the picture of the tiny girl with a Bible in front of her and an ancient pair of spectacles upon her nose, saying, "Now I'm grandmamma." They copy us by force of nature: they cannot help it. Such will be the holiness of the genuine Christian. He is born from above, and hence he lives above. His imitation of God springs out of his relationship to God. Holiness must be spontaneous, or it is spurious. We cannot be driven to holiness like a bullock to his ploughing; we must delight in the law of God after the inward man. "Be ye imitators of God, as dear children," because you do not wish for anything better than to be like your Father, and have no ambition in the world that approaches your aspiration to be holy even as God is holy, according to that word, "Be ye perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Under the Divine Shadow.— A Christian lady not long ago dreamed a dream which was not a dream, but fact. She saw herself as surrounded with God; encircled above, beneath, and all around, as with a blaze of light. Brilliance inconceivable made a pavilion for her; and while she stood in the midst of the glory she saw all her cares and her troubles, and her temptations, and her sins, wandering about outside of the wall of light, unable to reach her. Unless that light itself should open and make a way for them she was serenely secure, altho she could see the perils which else would destroy her. Is not

the Lord a wall of fire round about us, and the glory in the midst? Is it not written, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty?"

Chastening a Pledge of Fatherly Love.— If any one should say to a father, after he had chastened his child, "Why is it you have chastened the child?" he would not say, it is because I am his father. It is true in one sense; but he would say, "I have chastened the child because he has done wrong." Because the proximate reason why he had chastened his child would not be that he was his father, tho that would have something to do with it as a primary reason; but the absolute and primary cause would be, "I have chastened him because he has done wrong, because I wish to correct him for it, that he might not do so again." Now, God, when he chastens his children, never does it absolutely; because he is his father; but he does it for a wise reason. He has some other reason besides his fatherhood. At the same time, one reason why God afflicts his children and not others, is because he is their Father. If you were to go home to-day and see a dozen boys in the streets throwing stones and breaking windows it is very likely you would start the whole lot of them; but if there is one boy that would get a sweet knock on the head it would be your own; for you would say, "What are you at, John? What business have you here?" You might not be justified, perhaps, in meddling with the others — you would let their own fathers attend to them; but because you were his father, you would try to make him remember it. Certain special chastisements are inflicted on God's children, because they are his children; but it is not because they are his children that he chastens them at any one time, but because they have been doing something wrong. Now, if you are under chastisement, let this truth be

certain to you. Are the consolations of God small with thee? Is there any secret thing with thee? Art thou chastened in thy busines? Then what sin hast thou committed? Art thou cast down in thy spirit? Then what transgression has brought this on thee? Remember, it is not fair to say, "I am chastened because I am his child;" the right way to say it is, "I am his child, and therefore when he chastens me has a reason for it."

Give God the Rudder.— True wisdom is sure to set folly in a strong light. I have heard of a young man who went to college; and when he had been there one year, his parent said to him, "What do you know? Do you know more than when you went?" "Oh! yes," said he, "I do." Then he went the second year, and was asked the same question — "Do you know more than when you went?" "Oh! no," said he, "I know a great deal less." "Well," said the father, "you are getting on." Then he went the third year, and was asked the same question —"What do you know now?" "Oh!" said he, "I don't think I know anything." "That is right," said the father; "you have now learnt to profit, since you say you know nothing." He who is convinced that he knows nothing of himself as he ought to know, gives up steering his ship, and lets God put his hand on the rudder.

GOODNESS

Genuine Piety.— When a great Grecian artist was fashioning an image for the temple he was diligently carving the back part of the goddess, and one said to him, "You need not finish that part of the statue, because it is to be built into the wall." He replied, "The gods can see in the wall." He had a right idea of what is

due to God. That part of my religion which no man can see should be as perfect as if it were to be observed by all. The day shall declare it. When Christ shall come everything shall be made known, and published before the universe. Therefore see to it that it be fit to be thus made known.

Good but Good for Nothing.— I heard the other day of a Sunday-school address in America which pleased me much. The teacher, speaking to the boys, said, "Boys, here's a watch, what is it for?" The children answered, "To tell the time." "Well," he said, "suppose my watch does not tell the time, what is it good for?" "Good-for-nothing, sir." Then he took out a pencil. "What is this pencil for?" "It is to write with, sir." "Suppose this pencil won't make a mark, what is it good for?" "Good-for-nothing, sir." Then he took out his pocket-knife. "Boys, what is this for?" They were American boys, and so they shouted,— "to whittle with,"— that is to experiment on any substance that came in their way by cutting a notch in it. "But," said he, "suppose it will not cut, what is the knife good for?" "Good-for-nothing, sir." Then the teacher asked, "What is the chief end of man?" and they replied, "To glorify God." "But suppose a man does not glorify God, what is he good for?" "Good-for-nothing, sir." That brings out my point most clearly; there are many professors of whom *I* will not say that they are good-for-nothing, but methinks if they do not soon stir themselves up to glorify God by proclaiming the sweetness of God's love it will go hard with them. Remember how Jesus said of the savourless salt "henceforth it is good for nothing." What were you converted for? What were you forgiven for? What were you renewed for? What have you been preserved on earth for but to tell to others the glad tidings of salvation and so to glorify God? Do, then,

go out with your hands full of the honey of divine love and hold it out to others

GRATITUDE

Gratitude for Spiritual Blessings.— I was preaching this week for a young minister, and being anxious to know his character, I spoke of him with apparent coolness to an estimable lady of his congregation. In a very few moments she began to warm in his favor. She said, "You must not say any thing against him, sir; if you do, it is because you do not know him." "Oh," I said, "I knew him long before you did; he is not much, is he?" "Well," she said, "I must speak well of him, for he has been a blessing to my servants and family." I went out into the street, and saw some men and women standing about; so I said to them, "I must take your minister away." "If you do," they said, "we will follow you all over the world, if you take away a man who has done so much good to our souls." After collecting the testimony of fifteen or sixteen witnesses, I said, "If the man gets such witnesses as these let him go on; the Lord has opened his mouth, and the devil will never be able to shut it." These are the witnesses we want — men who can sing with the angels because their own households are converted to God.

Gratitude for Salvation.— It strikes me with wonder when I see how many of the very greatest of sinners have become the most useful of men. Do you see John Bunyan yonder? He is cursing God. He goes into the belfry and pulls the bell on Sunday, because he likes the bell-ringing; but when the church door is open, he is playing bowls upon the village green. There is the village tap, and there is no one that laughs so loud as John Bunyan. There are some people going to the meeting-house; there

is no one curses them so much as John. He is a ringleader in all vice. If there is a hen-roost to be robbed, Jack's your man. If there is any iniquity to be done, if there is any evil in the parish, you need not guess twice, John Bunyan is at the bottom of it. But who is it stands there in the dock before the magistrate? Who is it I hear just now —"If you will let me out of prison to-day, I will preach the gospel to-morrow, by the help of God?" Who was it that lay twelve years in prison, and when they said he might go out if he would promise not to preach, replied, "No, I will be here till the moss grows on mine eyelids, but I must and will preach God's gospel as soon as I have liberty?" Why, that is John Bunyan, the very man who cursed Christ the other day. A ringleader in vice has become the glorious dreamer, the very leader of God's hosts. See, what God did for him, and what God did for him he will do for you, if now you repent and seek the mercy of God in Christ Jesus.

"He is able, he is willing, doubt no more."

Expressing Gratitude.— We read in the paper some time ago that the King of Italy, to his great honor, appeared in a court of law on behalf of a man brought under charge of causing death. The king had seen the accident, and he came forward as a common witness in the court to say that the horse had mastered the driver, and the man was not to be blamed. I do not know the name of the man, but I feel pretty sure that Jacobi or Antonio, whoever he may be, if ever King Humbert wants somebody to speak up for him, he will find a friend in him: he will say, "My King came into court and spoke for me, and I will as long as ever I live speak up for him." Now, the Lord Jesus Christ is an advocate for you, therefore be an advocate for him. Can you ever be silent for Christ now that the Lord Christ has re-

deemed you from the curse of the law and the penalty of sin? I tell you, if you can be quiet and do nothing for Christ, I am afraid you have never tasted of his love and grace.

HEARERS

Hearers, but Not Doers.— Beware of being like John Bunyan's trees that were green outside, but inwardly rotten, and only fit to be tinder for the devil's tinder-box. Oh beware of saying as some of you do, "I go, sir," while you go not. I sometimes see sick people who quite alarm and distress me. I say to them, "My dear friend, you are dying; have you a hope?" There is no answer. "Do you know your lost state?" "Yes, sir." "Christ died for sinners." "Yes, sir." "Faith gives us of his grace." "Yes, sir." They say, "Yes, sir; yes, sir; yes, sir; yes, sir; yes, sir." I sometimes wish before God they would contradict me, for if they would but have honesty enough to say, "I do not believe a word of it," I should know how to deal with them. Stubborn oaks are levelled by the gale, but those who bend like the willow before every wind, what wind shall break them? Oh, dear brethren, beware of being gospel-hardened; or what is the same thing, softened but for a season. Beware of being a promising hearer of the word, and nothing more!

Personal Application of Truth.— A minister once sent his deacon to attend a certain anniversary service. The discourse turned upon Diotrephes, who loved the pre-eminence. The deacon's character was aptly described. He did not, however, agree with the preacher. He was himself a Diotrephes, though he failed to detect his own portrait; or at least, with apparent indifference, he asked a friend of his if he supposed there were such persons existing as those who had been described in the discourse?

"I cannot think," said he, "who the preacher could have been aiming at?" So his friend said, "Well, I think he must have been intending you and me." No better answer could have been given. I like each hearer to make the application to himself.

Deaf Hearers.— Many years ago a friend said that he could not hear me preach. I said to him, "Buy a horn." "No," he said, "it is not your voice; I can hear that, but I don't enjoy it." My reply was: "Perhaps that is my fault, but I am far from sure that it is not your own." I fear, in such cases, it is quite as often the hearer's fault as the preacher's fault. At any rate, when others profit, and our judgment approves, tho our hearts find no refreshment, there is reason to suspect that in the dulness of our senses we are compelled to bear chastisement for our unbelief. You go where others go, and find no solace. You hear what edifies and comforts them; but there is no cheer for you. You are deaf; your ears are closed to what the Lord says.

HEART

Writing on the Heart.— I have marvelled at the expression used in the text, "I will write my law *in* their hearts." To write *on* a heart must be difficult work but to write *in* a heart, in the very centre of the heart, who can do this but God? A man cuts his name upon a tree in the bark, and there it stands, and the letters grow with the tree; but to cut his name in the heart of the tree — how shall he accomplish this? And yet God doth divinely engrave his will and his law in the very heart and nature of man!

The Burglar in the Heart.—I do not believe that a man becomes a villain all at once. He puts his soul to school, his thoughts are his teachers, or rather they are the

school-books in which his soul reads; and at last he becomes capable of transacting the deeds of a scoundrel. If you think long upon any sin, the chances are that, as soon as the temptation to that sin comes, you will commit it. I have known persons produce a monomania by constant brooding upon one object. I did once know a man who was constantly apprehensive that he was being poisoned by people; and I always stood in trepidation for that man, lest he should poison himself. If you will harbor the thought — if you will ruminate on any sin, turn it over, and advise with it on your pillow; your affability will disarm your fear; and the traitor you have harbored will betray you before your suspicions are aroused. Beware, then, of all thoughts of sin. If you show a thief all the locks and bolts and bars in your house, and tell him how the cellar-window could be opened, or the back-door be made to give way, do not be surprised if, one of these nights, you should find all your goods stolen. If you introduce these evil thoughts into your habitation, you cannot wonder at the consequence, however startled your friends may be at the detection.

Tainted Food.— When I am asked to read a heretical book I think of good John Newton. Dr. Taylor, of Norwich, said to him: "Have you read my Key to the Romans?" "I have turned it over," said the doctor. "And is this the treatment a book must meet with which has cost me so many years' hard study; you ought to have read it carefully, and weighed deliberately what comes forward on so serious a subject." "Hold," said Newton, "you have cut me out full employment for a life as long as Methuselah's. My life is too short to be spent in reading contradictions of my religion. If the first page tells me the man is undermining truths, it is enough for me. If I had the first mouthful of a joint tainted, I do not

want to eat it through to be convinced; I ought to send it away." Having the truth confirmed in us, we can laugh all arguments to scorn; we are plated in a sheet of mail when we have a witness within us to God's truth. All the men in this world can not make us alter one single iota of what God has written within us.

Keeping the Heart Pure.— It would be of little use for our water companies to keep their reservoirs full, if they did not also keep them *pure*. I remember to have read a complaint in the newspaper of a certain provincial town, that a tradesman had been frequently supplied with fish from the water company, large eels having crept down the pipe, and sometimes creatures a little more loathsome. We have known such a thing as water companies supplying us with solids when they ought to have given us nothing but pure crystal. Now, no one likes that. The reservoir should be kept pure and clean; and unless the water comes from a pure spring, and is not impregnated with deleterious substances, however full the reservoir may be, the company will fail of satisfying or of benefiting its customers. Now it is essential for us to do with our hearts as the company must do with its reservoir. We must keep our hearts pure; for if the heart be not pure, the life can not be pure. It is quite impossible that it should be so.

The Wicked Heart.— An officer in India had tamed a leopard. From the time when it was quite a kitten he had brought it up, till it went about the house like a cat, and everybody played with it; but he was sitting in his chair one day asleep, and the leopard licked his hand — licked it in all innocence; but as he licked, the skin was broken, and the taste of blood came to the leopard, and from that moment it was not content to dwell with men. It rushed forth to kill, and was no more at ease till it reached the jungle. That leopard, tho

tamed, was a leopard still. So a man, sobered by moral motives, but unchanged in heart, is a fallen man still, and the taste of blood, I mean the taste of sin, will soon reveal the tiger in him. Wash a Russian, and you find a Tartar; tempt a moralist, and you discover a sinner! The thin crust of goodness, which is formed by education, soon disappears under temptation. You may be everything that looks like good, but except you have been born again you must remember you are still capable of the direst evil.

The Trouble Within.— The wise man saith, "As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place." It is not the box that makes the jewel, nor the place that makes the man. "Oh, but anywhere rather than this!" Yes, and when you get into the place you now covet, you will pine to be back again. A barren tree is none the better for being transplanted. A blind man may stand at many windows before he will improve his view. If it is difficult to produce good works where you are, you will find it still difficult where you wish to be. He who said that he leaped so many yards at Rhodes, was asked to do the same feat at home; surely the place could not take away his strength, nor give it to him.

Oh, sirs, the real difficulty lies not without you, but within you.

Gospel Hardened.— It is quite possible for a minister to preach too long to any one set of people, if they get so accustomed to the tones of his voice that they are never aroused. The "click, click" of the mill gets to be so customary to the miller that he goes to sleep. Over in Bankside, I am told, when a man is first put inside a boiler while the rivets are being fastened, he cannot stop long, the noise is so dreadful, but after a time the boiler-maker gets so used to the horrible din that he can al-

most go to sleep inside. Well, now, so it really is under any ministry when the people get gospel-hardened.

The Hardening Heart.— Have you ever seen sponges that have been turned into flints? Well, that is a slow process, it takes a long time. The like process, however, is gradually happening to you; every year you are getting more flinty. The drip, drip, drip of this world's care and sin is petrifying you. You are getting stony. It strikes me the best time to repent in is this moment; and the very best season in which to fly to Jesus is now. Ere yet the clock has ticked again your heart will have grown more callous. It certainly does not soften. When will there be any influence more potent than there is now to help you?

HEAVEN

Only the Good Would be Happy in Heaven.— Some of you could not be happy if you were allowed to enter that heaven. If you could be admitted between those pearly gates which forever exclude pollution, sin, and shame, you could not be happy there. Shall I tell you why? It is a land of spirit, and you have neglected your spirit; some of you even deny that you have a spirit, and I do not wonder that you say so, because I do not suppose that you have ever exercised it; but let a man who has delighted to commune with the Holy Spirit enter into the spirit-world, and he will be in his element! Besides, the world to come is a holy world; the engagements of disembodied spirits are all pure and lovely. What will that man do who loved drunkenness, who indulged in unclean habits? He will be out of his element. If he could be in heaven, as Whitfield used to say, he would ask God to let him out, and would run into hell for shelter, for heaven would be a dreadful place to an ungodly man. There is a dream which is told (I tell it not for the dream,

but for the moral of it) of a young woman who imagined that she was in heaven unconverted, and thought she saw upon the pavement of transparent gold multitudes of spirits dancing to the sweetest music. She stood still, unhappy, motionless, silent, and when the King said to her, "Why do you not partake in the joy?" she answered, "I cannot join in the dance, for I do not knew the measure; I cannot join in the song, for I do not know the tune;" then said he in a voice of thunder, "What dost thou here?" And she thought herself cast out forever. Ah, dear hearer! heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. If you do not learn heaven's language on earth you must know you cannot learn it in the world to come.

Not Yet Due in Heaven.— Whitefield and a company of ministers were talking together and expressing their desire to go to heaven. Good Mr. Tennant was the only man who differed from them. He said he did not wish to die; and he thought that if his brother Whitefield would but consider for a time, he would not wish to be gone either; for, he said, if you hire a man to do a day's work, and he is saying all the day, "I wish it were evening; I wish it were time to go home," you would think, "What a lazy fellow he is;" and you would wish you had never engaged him. "So," he said, "I am afraid it is nothing but our idleness that often prompts us to desire to be away from our work." If there be a soul to win, let me stop until I have won it. Truly, some of us might summon up courage enough to say, "I would fain barter heaven for the glory of Christ, and not only wait twenty years out of heaven if I may have twenty years of glorifying him the better, but wait out altogether if I may outside heaven sing to him sweeter songs, and honor him more than I can inside its walls; for outside heaven shall be heaven to me if it shall help me to glorify my

Lord and Master the better." You have heard, I dare say, that anecdote of good Mr. Whitefield, in his early ministry, lying down, as he thought, to die, in a high fever, and a poor negro woman sitting by his side and tending him. In his sad moments, Whitefield thought of dying; but the black woman said, "No, Master Whitefield, you are not to die yet: there are thousands of souls to bring to Christ; so keep up your spirits, for you must live, and not die; your Master has yet a work for you to do."

No Strife in Heaven.— An old Scotch elder had been disputing with his minister at an elders' meeting. He said some hard things, and almost broke the minister's heart. Afterwards he went home, and the minister went home too. Next morning the elder came down, and his wife said to him, "Eh, Jan! ye look very sad this morning. What's the matter wi' ye?" "Ah!" said he, "you would be sad, too, if you had had such a dream as I've had." "Weel, and what did ye dream about?" "Och! I dreamed I had been at an elders' meeting, and I said some hard things and grieved the minister; and as he went hame I thought he died and went to heaven. A fortnight after, I thought I died, and that I went to heaven, too. And when I got to the gates of heaven, out came the minister and put out his hand to take me, saying, 'Come alang, Jan, there's nae strife up here, and I'm happy to see ye.'" The elder went to the minister to beg his pardon directly, but he found he was dead; and he laid it so to heart that within a fortnight the elder himself departed. And I should not wonder if he did meet the minister at heaven's gates, and hear him say, "Come alang, Jan! there's nae strife up here." It would be good for us to recollect that there is no strife up there. Glorified saints have not strife among themselves; and we should love one another more in brotherly

kindness if we thought more of heaven and more of our blessed Jesus.

Recognition of Friends in Heaven.— I always thought that a quietus to the question which the wife of old John Ryland asked: "Do you think," she said, "you will know me in heaven?" "Why," said he, "I know you here; and do you think I shall be a bigger fool in heaven than I am on earth?" The question is beyond dispute. We shall live in heaven with bodies, and that decides the matter. We shall know each other in heaven; you may take that for a positive fact, and not mere fancy.

Memory of Earth's Mercies a Joy in Heaven.— I think Dr. Watts is right when he says that we shall "with transporting joys recount the labors of our feet." It is rather a small subject, and probably we shall far more delight to dwell on the labors of our Redeemer's hands and feet; but still we shall remember all the way whereby the Lord our God led us, and we shall talk to one another concerning it. In heaven we shall remember our happy Sabbaths here below, when our hearts burned within us while Jesus himself drew near. Since Jesus speaks after he has risen of the things that he said while he was with his disciples, we perceive that the river of death is not like the fabled Lethe, which caused all who drank thereof to forget their past. We shall arise with a multitude of hallowed memories enriching our minds. Death will not be oblivion to us, for it was not so to Jesus. Rather shall we meditate on mercies experienced, and by discoursing thereon we shall make known to principalities and powers the manifold wisdom of God.

The Rewards of Heaven.— Here comes Whitfield, the man who stood before twenty thousand at a time to preach the gospel, who in England, Scotland, Ireland, and America has testified the truth of God, and who could

count his converts by thousands, even under one sermon! Here he comes, the man that endured persecution and scorn, and yet was not moved — the man of whom the world was not worthy, who lived for his fellow men, and died at last for their cause; stand by angels and admire, while the Master takes him by the hand and says, "Well done, well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!" See how free grace honors the man whom it enabled to do valiantly. Hark! Who is this that comes there? a poor thin-looking creature, that on earth was a consumptive; there was a hectic flush now and then upon her cheek, and she lay three long years upon her bed of sickness. Was she a prince's daughter, for it seems heaven is making much stir about her? No, she was a poor girl that earned her living by her needle, and she worked herself to death! — Stitch, stitch, stitch, from morning to night! and here she comes. She went prematurely to her grave, but she is coming, like a shock of corn fully ripe, into heaven; and her Master says, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful in a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." She takes her place by the side of Whitfield. Ask what she ever did, and you find out that she used to live in some back garret down some dark alley in London; and there used to be another poor girl come to work with her, and that poor girl, when she first came to work with her, was a gay and volatile creature, and this consumptive child told her about Christ; and they used, when she was well enough, to creep out of an evening to go to chapel or to church together. It was hard at first to get the other one to go, but she used to press her lovingly; and when the girl went wild a little, she never gave her up. She used to say, "O, Jane, I wish you loved the Savior;" and when Jane was not there she used

to pray for her, and when she was there she prayed with her: and now and then when she was stitching away, read a page out of the Bible to her, for poor Jane could not read. And with many tears she tried to tell her about the Savior who loved her and gave himself for her. At last, after many a day of hard persuasion, and many an hour of sad disappointment, and many a night of sleepless tearful prayer, at last she lived to see the girl profess her love to Christ; and she left her and took sick, and there she lay till she was taken to the hospital, where she died. When she was in the hospital she used to have a few tracts, and she used to give them to those who came to see her; she would try, if she could, to get the women to come around, and she would give them a tract. When she first went into the hospital, if she could creep out of bed, she used to get by the side of one who was dying, and the nurse used to let her do it; till at last she got too ill, and then she used to ask a poor woman on the other side of the ward, who was getting better, and was going out, if she would come and read a chapter to her; not that she wanted her to read to her on her own account, but for her sake, for she thought it might strike her heart while she was reading it. At last this poor girl died and fell asleep in Jesus; and the poor consumptive needle-woman had said to her, "Well done" — and what more could an archangel have said to her? —"she hath done what she could."

HINDRANCES

Overcoming Hindrances.— You remember in John Bunyan's Life he says that one Sunday, when he was playing on the village green at a game of cat, he was just about to strike the cat when a voice came to him from heaven, and said, "Wilt thou have thy sins and go to hell, or leave thy sins and go to heaven?" And he stood there

in the midst of his companions and paused, and they could not think what ailed the tinker while he was disputing in his mind which it should be, Christ and heaven, or his sins and hell. Now, whatever your hindrance is — be it money, be it worldly ambition, or be it any fond passion of the flesh — whatever it is, give it up. If it be thy right hand, thou hadst better cut it off, and cast it from thee, than keeping it seal thine endless doom. If it be thy right eye, 'twere better for thee to pluck it out, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.

Overcoming Difficulties.— I have known a brother wanting to go abroad to preach the gospel to the heathen, but a great many difficulties have been thrown in his way, and therefore he has said, "I can see that I am not called to go." Why not? Is no man called unless his way is easy? I should think myself all the more called to a service if I found obstacles in my way. The course of true service never did run smooth. I should say, "The devil is trying to hinder me, but I will do it in spite of all the devils in hell." Will you always be wanting to have your bread buttered for you on both sides? Must your road be gravelled, and smoothed with a garden roller? Are you a carpet knight, for whom there is to be no fighting? You are not worthy to be a soldier of Jesus Christ at all if you look for ease.

Meet Difficulties Bravely.— I was once staying in the north of Scotland, where there was a ferocious dog chained up. He came out and I patted him, and he jumped up with his fore-feet upon me; I caressed him, and he seemed particularly fond of me. The master came out. "Come away, my dear sir," said he, "that dog will rend you to pieces." But I did not know it, and when I passed by he seemed to know I was not at all afraid of him, so he didn't meddle with me. In like manner, Christians, be not terrified at your adversaries.

HOPE

Hope "The Swimming Thought."— You know what the New Zealanders call hope; they call it in their language "the swimming thought," because it always floats and never sinks. You cannot drown it; it always keeps its head above the wave. When you think you have drowned the Christian's hope, up it comes all dripping from the brine, and cries again, "Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him!" Hope is the nightingale that sings in the night; faith is the lark that mounts up towards heaven; but hope is the nightingale that cheers the valley in the darkness.

Hope of Immortality.— To-day we are like birds in the egg; so long as the shell is whole we are not free: death breaks the shell. Does the fledgling lament the dissolution of the shell? I never heard of a bird in its nest pining over its broken shell; no, its thought runs otherwise: to wings, and flight, and sunny skies. So let it be with us. This body will be dissolved: let it be so; it is meet it should be. We have been glad of it while we have needed it, and we thank God for the wondrous skill displayed in it; but when we no longer require it we shall escape from it as from imprisonment, and never wish to return to its narrow bounds.

The Fountain of Hope.— A rich man has a *cistern* full of riches, but a poor saint has got a *fountain* of mercy, and he is the richest who has a fountain. Now, if my neighbor be a rich man, he may have as much wealth as ever he pleases, it is only a cistern full, it will soon be exhausted; but a Christian has a fountain that ever flows, and let him draw, draw on forever, the fountain will still keep on flowing. However large may be the stagnant pool, if it be stagnant, it is but of little worth; but the

flowing stream, tho it seem to be but small, needs but time, and it will have produced an immense volume of precious water. Thou are never to have a great pool of riches, they are always to keep on flowing to thee; "Thy bread shall be given thee, and thy water shall be sure." As old William Huntingdon says, "The Christian has a hand-basket portion. Many a man, when his daughter marries, does not give her much, but he says to her, 'I shall send you a sack of flour one day, and so-and-so the next day, and now and then a sum of gold; and as long as I live I will always send you something." Says he, "She will get a great deal more than her sister, who has had a thousand pounds down. That is how my God deals with me: he gives to the rich man all at once, but to me day by day." Ah, Egypt, thou wert rich when thy granaries were full, but those granaries might be emptied; Israel was far richer when they could not see their granaries, but only saw the manna drop from heaven, day by day. Now, Christian, that is thy portion — the portion of the fountain always flowing, and not of the cistern-full, and soon to be emptied.

Saved Through Blasted Hopes.— You have all heard the old story of the celebrated painter who was painting in St. Paul's, and who, looking at his work, went gradually back, inch by inch, to get a view of it, so that he might see the excellence of its proportions, until his feet were just on the edge of the platform upon which he stood; and he would have fallen down and been dashed in pieces upon the pavement beneath, but just at that moment a workman who stood there, desirous to save his life, and not knowing how to do it, hit upon an expedient which proved to be a very wise one. Instead of shouting out to his master, "Sir, you are in danger," which would most certainly have sent him backward, he took up a brush, and dipping it in a pot of paint, dashed it at

the picture. The good man rushed forward in anger to chastise him; but when it was explained, he clearly saw that he had acted wisely.

HUMILITY

Humility Necessary.— He gives us temporal mercies, and then we presumptuously say, "My mountain standeth firm; I shall never be moved." We meet with the poor saints, and we begin to hector over them, as if we were something, and they were nothing. We find some in trouble; we have no sympathy with them; we are bluff and blunt with them, as we talk with them about their troubles; yea, we are even savage and cruel with them. We meet with some who are in deep distress and faint-hearted; we begin to forget when we were faint-hearted too, and because they cannot run as fast as we can, we run far ahead, and turn back and look at them, call them sluggards, and say they are idle and lazy. And perhaps even in the pulpit, if we are preachers, we have got hard words to say against those who are not quite so advanced as we are. Well, mark, there never was a saint yet, that grew proud of his fine feathers, but what the Lord plucked them out by and by. There never yet was an angel that had pride in his heart, but he lost his wings, and fell into Gehenna, as Satan and those fallen angels did; and there shall never be a saint who indulges self-conceit, and pride, and self-confidence, but the Lord will spoil his glories, and trample his honors in the mire, and make him cry out yet again, "Lord, have mercy upon me," less than the least of all saints, and the "very chief of sinners."

Humility in Prayer.— When we come to God, our prayers are little broken things; we can not put them together; but our Father, he will hear us. Oh! what a beginning

is "Our Father," to a prayer full of faults, and a foolish prayer perhaps, a prayer in which we are going to ask what we ought not to ask for! "Father, forgive the language! forgive the matter!" As one dear brother said the other day at the prayer meeting,— he could not get on in prayer, and he finished up on a sudden by saying, "Lord, I can not pray to-night as I should wish; I can not put the words together; Lord, take the meaning, take the meaning," and sat down. That is just what David said once, "Lo, all my desire is before thee"— not my words, but my desire.

IMMORTALITY

The Healing of Death.— At Stratford-on-Bow, in the days of Queen Mary, there was once a stake erected for the burning of two martyrs, one of them a lame man, the other a blind man. Just when the fire was lit, the lame man hurled away his staff, and turning round, said to the blind man, "Courage, brother, this fire will cure us both." So can the righteous say of the grave, "Courage, the grave will cure us all; we shall leave our infirmities behind us." What patience this should give us to endure all our trials, for they are not of long duration.

Immortality.— I have often thought that the child of God is very much like the Crusaders. The Crusaders started off on their journey, and they had to fight their way through many miles of enemies, and to march through leagues of danger. You remember, perhaps, in history, the story that when the armies of the Duke of Bouillon came in sight of Jerusalem, they sprang from their horses, clapped their hands, and cried, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" They forgot all their toils, all the weariness of the journey and all their wounds, for there was Jerusalem in their sight. And how will the saint at

last cry, "Jerusalem! Jerusalem!" when all sorrow, and all poverty and sickness are past, and he is blest with immortality.

"The Land of the Living."— A saint was once dying, and another who sat by him said —"Farewell, brother, I shall never see you again in the land of the living." "Oh," said the dying man, "I shall see you again in the land of the *living* that is up yonder, where I am going; this is the land of the *dying*." Oh, brethren and sisters, if we should never meet again in the land of the dying, have we a hope that we shall meet in the land of the living and drink the best wine at last?

INFIDELITY

Paul Not an Agnostic.— Let us pass on to *consider how Paul could say he knew this.* This wonderfully enlightened nineteenth century has produced an order of wise men who glory in their ignorance. They call themselves "Agnostics," or knownothings. When I was a boy it would have seemed odd to me to have met with a man who gloried in being an ignoramus, and yet that is the Latin for that Greek word "Agnostic." Is it not singular to hear a man boastfully say, "I am an ignoramus"? How different is our apostle! He says "we know."

Infidelity a Frail Support.— In the backwoods of Canada there resided a good minister, who one evening went out to meditate, as Isaac did, in the fields. He soon found himself on the borders of a forest, which he entered, and walked along a track which had been trodden before him; musing, musing still, until at last the shadows of twilight gathered around him, and he began to think how he should spend a night in the forest. He trembled at the idea of remaining there, with the poor shelter of a

tree into which he would be compelled to climb. On a sudden he saw a light in the distance, among the trees, and imagining that it might be from the window of some cottage where he would find a hospitable retreat, he hastened to it, and to his surprise saw a space cleared, and trees laid down to make a platform, and upon it a speaker addressing a multitude. He thought to himself, "I have stumbled on a company of people, who in this dark forest have assembled to worship God, and some minister is preaching to them, at this late hour of the evening, concerning the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;" but to his surprise and horror, when he came nearer, he found a young man declaiming against God, daring the Almighty to do his worst upon him, speaking terrible things in wrath against the justice of the Most High, and venturing most bold and lawful assertions concerning his own disbelief in a future state. It was altogether a singular scene; it was lighted up by pine-knots, which cast a glare here and there, while the thick darkness in other places still reigned. The people were intent on listening to the orator, and when he sat down thunders of applause were given to him; each one seeming to emulate the other in his praise. Thought the minister, "I must not let this pass; I must rise and speak; the honor of my God and his cause demands it." But he feared to speak, for he knew not what to say, having come there suddenly; but he would have ventured, had not something else occurred. A man of middle age, hale and strong, rose, and leaning on his staff, he said: "My friends, I have a word to speak to you to-night. I am not about to refute any of the arguments of the orator; I shall not criticise his style; I shall say nothing concerning what I believe to be the blasphemies he has uttered; but I shall simply relate to you a fact, and after I have done that you shall draw your own conclusions. Yester-

day I walked by the side of yonder river; I saw on its floods a young man in a boat. The boat was unmanageable; it was going fast toward the rapids; he could not use the oars, and I saw that he was not capable of bringing the boat to the shore. I saw that young man wring his hands in agony; by-and-by he gave up the attempt to save his life, kneeled down and cried with desperate earnestness, 'O, God! save my soul! If my body can not be saved, save my soul.' I heard him confess that he had been a blasphemer; I heard him vow that if his life were spared he would never be such again; I heard him implore the mercy of heaven for Jesus Christ's sake, and earnestly plead that he might be washed in his blood. These arms saved that young man from the flood; I plunged in, brought the boat to shore, and saved his life. That same young man has just now addressed you, and cursed his Maker. What say you to this, sirs?" The speaker sat down. You may guess what a shudder ran through the young man himself, and how the audience in one moment changed their notes, and saw that after all, while it was a fine thing to brag and bravado against Almighty God on dry land, and when danger was distant, it was not quite so grand to think ill of him when near the verge of the grave. We believe there is enough conscience in every man to convince him that God must punish him for his sin; therefore we think that our text will wake an echo in every heart.—"If he turn not, he will whet his sword."

INVITATION

The Pearl of Great Price.— I will suppose this morning that I am sent here by high authority to sell the Koh-i-noor, or a diamond worth ten thousand times as much, a jewel worth a thousand millions of pounds. I am bound to sell it to you now, but I am sure you cannot purchase

it at any price worthy of it; all you could offer would be so small a portion of its value that I would sooner give it away than lower the repute of the jewel by taking such a trifle for it. The gospel is so precious a thing that if it is bought the whole world could not pay for it, and therefore, if bought at all it must needs be without money and without price.

The Bell of Welcome.— At the top of the Hospice of St. Bernard, in the storm, when the snow is falling fast, the monks ring the great bell, and when the way cannot be seen, the traveller can almost hear the way to the house of refuge across the snowy waste. So would I ring that bell this morning. Poor lost traveller, with thy sins and thy fears blowing cold into thy face, "Come and welcome, come and welcome," to a Savior once dead and buried for thee, but now risen and pleading at the right hand of God. If thou canst not see thy way, yet hear it. "Hear, and your soul shall live; and he will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."

"Whosoever Will."— "Ah!" saith one, "God knows I am willing, but still I do not think I am worthy." No, I know you are not, but what is that to do with it? It is not "whosoever is *worthy*," but "whosoever *will*, let him come." "Well," says one, "I believe that whosoever will, may come, but not me, for I am the vilest sinner out of hell." But hark thee, sinner, it says, "*whosoever*." What a big word that is! Whosoever! There is no standard-height here. It is of any height and any size. Little sinners, big sinners, black sinners, fair sinners, sinners doubled-dyed, old sinners, aggravated sinners, sinners who have committed every crime in the whole catalogue,— *whosoever*. Doth this exempt one? Who can be excluded from this whosoever? It mattereth not who thou mayest be, nor what thou mayest have been, if

thou art willing to be saved; free as the air thou breathest is the love and grace of God. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Whosoever.— I am deeply in love with that word "whosoever." It is a splendid word. A person who kept many animals had some great dogs and some little ones, and in his eagerness to let them enter his house freely he had two holes cut in the door, one for the big dogs and another for the little dogs. You may well laugh, for the little dogs could surely have come in wherever there was room for the larger ones. This "whosoever" is the great opening, suitable for sinners of every size. "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

JOY

Christian Gladness.— There is an expression in the Greek that never has been rendered into English, and never will be.—αγαλλιασθε. Old Trapp half puns upon the *agalliasthe* as he says, "dance a galliard." I do not know what a "galliard" was, but I suppose that it was some very joyous kind of dance. Certainly we know of no better way of translating our Lord's word than by — exult, or leap for joy. Even when your good name shall be tarnished by the malice of the wicked, then you are to leap. When are you to be wretched? Surely despondency is excluded. If slander is to make us dance, when are we to fret? Suppose some other kind of trial should come upon you, you are still to rejoice in the Lord always.

Afraid of Gladness.— I have known some very good people spoiled for practical usefulness, and spoiled as to being like the Lord Jesus Christ, by their deeply laid conviction that it was wicked to be glad. Well do I remember an earnest Christian woman who saw me when I

was first converted, full of the joy of the Lord, and joyfully assured of my salvation in Christ Jesus. She seemed distressed at the sight of so much joy. She shook her head. She looked at me with that heavenly-minded pity which these good people usually lay by in store. It seemed to her a dreadful thing that so young a Christian should dare to know whom he had believed. If you had been a Christian a hundred years you might perhaps begin to think it possible that you were saved; but to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ straight away, like a little child, and at once to rejoice in his salvation, seemed to this dear old Christian woman to be an act of such shocking temerity that she could only shake her dear head and prognosticate all sorts of horrible things. Since then I have found a great many like her.

Superiority of Christian Joy.— The joy which we wear is far superior to any which the evil one can offer us; and so his temptation has lost its power. What can the devil offer a joyous Christian? Why, if he were to say to him, "I will give thee all the kingdoms of the world and the glory thereof, if thou wilt fall down and worship me, the believer would reply to him, "Fiend, I have more than that. I have perfect contentment; I have absolute delight in God. My soul swims in a deep sea of bliss as I think of God." The devil will speedily quit such a man as that; for the joy of God is an armor through which he cannot send the dagger of his temptation.

The Honey of Christian Experience.— There were no plates and dishes out there in that Timnath vineyard, and so his own hands were the only salvers upon which Samson could present the delicacy,—"he took thereof in his hands, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they did eat." Perhaps you think, "If I am to speak to any person upon true religion, I should

like to do it in poetry." Better do it in prose, for perhaps they will take more notice of your verse than of your subject. Give them the honey *in your hands,* and if there is no dish they cannot take notice of the dish. "Ay, but I should like to do it very properly," says one; "it is a very important matter, I should like to speak most correctly." But my judgment is, that, as you will not be likely to attain to correct speech all in a hurry, and your friends may die while you are learning your grammar and your rhetoric, you had better tell them of Jesus according to your present ability. Tell them there is life in a look at Jesus. Tell them the story simply, as one child talks to another. Carry the honey in your hands, though it drip all round; no hurt will come of the spilling, there are always little ones waiting for such drops. If you were to make the gospel drip about everywhere, and sweeten all things, it would be no waste, but a blessed gain to all around. Therefore, I say to you, tell of Jesus Christ as best you can, and never cease to do so while life lasts.

Overflowing Christian Joy.— The moment a man is converted, if he would let himself alone, his instincts would lead him to tell his fellows. I know that the moment I came out of that little chapel wherein I found the Savior, I wanted to pour out my tale of joy. I could have cried with Cennick —

> "Now will I tell to sinners round,
> What a dear Saviour I have found;
> I'll point to thy redeeming blood,
> And say, 'Behold the way to God!'"

I longed to tell how happy my soul was, and what a deliverance I had obtained from the crushing burden of sin. I longed to see all others come and trust my

Lord and live! I did not preach a sermon, but I think I could have told out all the gospel at that first hour.

Joy Without Bitterness.— Did you never cry for joy? You say, perhaps, "Not since I was a child." Nor have I; but I have always remained a child as far as divine joy is concerned. I could often cry for joy when I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him.

Ours is a joy which will bear thinking over. You can dare to pry into the bottom of it and test its foundation. It is a joy which does not grow stale; you may keep it in your mouth by the year together, and yet it never cloys; you may return to it again, and again, and again, and find it still as fresh as ever. And the best of it is there is no repentance after it. You are never sorry that you were so glad. The world's gay folk are soon sick of their drink; but we are only sorry that we were not gladder still, for our gladness sanctifies. We are not denied any degree of joy to which we can possibly attain, for ours is a healthy, health-giving delight. Christ is the fulness of joy to his people, and we are bidden to enjoy him to the full. Christians have their sweets, and those are as honey and the honeycomb, the best of the best.

JUDGMENT

Judgment Warped by Personal Considerations.— We have heard, I dare say, the story of the lawyer who was waited upon by a farmer, to ask him what would be the penalty for a man whose horse was always getting into his neighbor's field and eating his corn, whether it would be heavy; he had warned him several times, and he always would do it, and it was his fence, and he ought to have mended it. The lawyer said of course there would be a considerable fine, no doubt, and so on. "Well," said he, "sir, it is your horse that has done

this." "Oh!" said our friend, the solicitor, "that is quite a different question; I did not know it was my horse before I gave my opinion." So it is, generally, with regard to anything that is done amiss, if it hurts you, or if it hurts me, we always feel very indignant about it, but if it only offends the Majesty of heaven we make light of it.

LIFE

Human Kindness.— I like Luther with a wife and children. I like to see him with his family and a Christmas-tree, making music with little Johnny Luther on his knee. I love to hear him sing a little hymn with the children, and tell his pretty boy about the horses in heaven with golden bridles and silver saddles. Faith had not taken away his manhood, but sanctified it to noblest uses. Luther did not live and move as if he were a mere cleric, but as a brother to our common humanity.

True Wisdom.— Copernicus declared the truth that the earth and the planets revolve around the sun. His opponents replied that this could not be true, for if the planet Venus revolved around the sun, she must present the same phases as the moon. This was very true. Copernicus looked up to Venus, but he could not see those phases, nor could any one else, nevertheless he stuck to his statement, and said, "I have no reply to give, but in due time God will be so good that an answer will be found." Copernicus died, and his teaching had not yet been justified; but soon after Galileo came forward with his telescope, and on looking at Venus he saw that she did pass through exactly the same changes as the moon. Thus wisdom is justified of her children. Truth may not prevail to-day or to-morrow, but her ultimate victory is sure.

Known by Our Deeds.— "Ye shall know them *by their fruits.*" But how am I to know a man's fruits? By watching him one day? I may, perhaps, form a guess of his character by being with him for a single hour; but I could not confidently pronounce upon a man's true state even by being with him for a week. George Whitefield was asked what he thought of a certain person's character. "I have never lived with him," was his very proper answer.

Idle Dreams.— Rowland Hill said to a lady, who knew she was a child of God, because she dreamed such and such a thing: "Never mind, ma'am, what you did when you were asleep; let us see what you do when you are awake."

A Wasted Life.— Your sins cannot keep you from the jaws of death. I say, sinner, I want thee to look at Christ's sepulchre, too, for when thou diest it may have done thee great good to think of it. You have heard of Queen Elizabeth, crying out that she would give an empire for a single hour. Or have you heard the despairing cry of the gentleman on board the "Arctic," when it was going down, who shouted to the boat, "Come back! I will give you £30,000 if you will come and take me in." Ah! poor man, it were but little if he had thirty thousand worlds, if he could thereby prolong his life: "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath, will he give for his life." Some of you who can laugh this morning, who came to spend a merry hour in this hall, will be dying, and then ye will pray and crave for life, and shriek for another Sabbath-day. Oh! how the Sabbaths ye have wasted will walk like ghosts before you! Oh! how they will shake their snaky hair in your eyes! How will ye be made to sorrow and weep, because ye wasted precious hours, which, when they are gone, are gone too far to be recalled. May God save you from the pangs of remorse.

Light Needed for the Feet.— Some people make use of Christ's gospel to illuminate their heads, instead of making use of it to illuminate their hearts. They are like the farmer Rowland Hill once described. The farmer is sitting by the fire with his children; the cat is purring on the hearth, and they are all in great comfort. The plowman rushes in and cries, "Thieves! thieves! thieves!" The farmer rises up in a moment, grasps the candle, holds it up to his head, rushes after the thieves, and, says Rowland Hill, "he tumbles over a wheelbarrow, because he holds the light to his head, instead of holding it to his feet." So there are many who just hold religion up to illuminate their intellect, instead of holding it down to illuminate their practice; and so they make a sad tumble of it, and cast themselves into the mire, and do more hurt to their Christian profession in one hour than they will ever be able to retrieve.

The Blessedness of Old Age.— Some time ago, I stepped up to an old man whom I saw when preaching at an anniversary, and I said to him, "Brother, do you know there is no man in the whole chapel I envy so much as you!" "Envy me," he said, "why, I am eighty-seven." I said, "I do, indeed; because you are so near your home, and because I believe that in old age there is a peculiar joy, which we young people do not taste at present. You have got to the bottom of the cup, and it is not with God's wine as it is with man's. Man's wine becomes dregs at the last, but God's wine is sweeter the deeper you drink of it." He said, "That's very true, young man," and shook me by the hand. I believe there is a blessedness about old age that we young men know nothing of. I will tell you how that is. In the first place the old man has a good experience to talk about. The young men are only just trying some of the promises; but the old man can turn them over one by

one, and say, "There, I have tried that, and that, and that." We read them over and say, "I *hope* they are true," but the old man says, "I *know* they are true." And then he begins to tell you why. He has got a history for every one, like a soldier for his medals; and he takes them out and says, "I will tell you when the Lord revealed that to me: just when I lost my wife; just when I buried my son; just when I was turned out of my cottage, and did not get work for six weeks; or, at another time, when I broke my leg." He begins telling you the history of the promises, and says, "There, now, I know they are all true." What a blessed thing, to look upon them as paid notes; to bring out the old checks that have been cashed, and say, "I know they are genuine, or else they would not have been paid."

Making Our Own Epitaph.— When the Eastern Emperors were crowned at Constantinople, it is said to have been a custom for the royal mason to set before his majesty a certain number of marble slabs, one of which he was to choose to be his tombstone. It was well for him to remember his funeral at his coronation. I bring before you now the unwritten marbles of life: which will you have, holiness, or sin, Christ or self? When you have chosen, you will begin to write the inscription upon it; for your life's works will be your memorial.

The Frailty of the Human Body.— Paul was accustomed to make tents. I do not suppose he ever manufactured any very large or sumptuous ones — probably he did not own capital enough for that, but he was a tent worker and mender. The use of tents was common enough among the Roman people in Paul's day. The gentry delighted in bright pavilions which they could set up at pleasure, but the commoner folk found pleasure in spending a part of their time under canvas. Whilst he was sitting writing this letter it is most likely that Paul

had a tent or two to repair lying near his hand, and this suggested to him the language of the verse before us. When a tent is newly placed it is but a frail structure, very far removed from the substantiality of a house; in that respect it is exactly like this feeble corporeal frame of ours, which is crushed before the moth. Paul felt that his body would not need any great force to overthrow it; it was like the tent which the Midianite saw in his dream, which only needed to be struck by a barley cake, and lo! it lay along. A house of solid masonry may need a crowbar and a pick to start its stones from their places, but feebler tools will soon overturn a tent and make a ruin of it. The body is liable to dissolution from causes so minute as to be imperceptible — a breath of foul air, an atom of poisonous matter, a trifle, a mere nothing, may end this mortal life. I hope that you and I duly remember the frailty of our bodies.

Frailty of Human Life.— I saw the other day an encampment of gipsies out upon the common; many of this wandering race were sitting under a coarse covering sustained by sticks, I should exaggerate if I called them poles; and I could not help feeling that such an abode was all very well on a warm day, but not at all desirable when the east-wind was blowing, or a shower of sleet was driving along, or a deluge of rain descending.

The Loneliness of Life.— Samson was not hunting for wild beasts; he was engaged on a much more tender business. He was walking in the vineyards of Timnath, thinking of anything but lions, and "behold," says the Scripture, "a young lion roared against him." It was a remarkable and startling occurrence. He had left his father and mother and was quite alone; no one was within call to aid him in meeting his furious assailant. Human sympathy is exceedingly precious, but there are

points in our spiritual conflict in which we cannot expect to receive it. To each man there are passages in life too narrow for walking two abreast. Upon certain crags we must stand alone. As our constitutions differ, so our trials, which are suited to our constitutions, must differ also. Each individual has a secret with which no friend can intermeddle; for every life has its mystery and its hid treasure. Do not be ashamed, young Christian, if you meet with temptations which appear to you to be quite singular: we have each one thought the same of his trials. You imagine that no one suffers as you do, whereas no temptation hath happened unto you but such as is common to man, and God will with the temptation make a way of escape that you may be able to bear it. Yet for the time being you may have to enter into fellowship with your Lord when he trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him. Is not this for your good? Is not this the way to strength? What kind of piety is that which is dependent upon the friendship of man? What sort of religion is that which cannot stand alone? Beloved, you will have to die alone, and you need therefore grace to cheer you in solitude.

Uncertain Tenure of Life.— Have you not been startled by the news that a neighbor or acquaintance, with whom you chatted a day or two ago, is dead? "Dead!" you said. "Why, he was in my shop only a few days ago! Dead! Why, he seemed to be in good health, strong in body, vigorous in mind, full of plans and projects; I should have thought of any man being dead sooner than he!" Do not you recollect the time when you heard the bell toll for a near relative, and when you stood over the open grave? Ah, then, when the dust fell upon the coffin-lid, and the words were uttered, "Dust to dust, ashes to ashes," each of those thundering morsels said, "I have a message from God unto thee."

LOVE

Loving Our Neighbors.— It would be a good thing if some ladies loved their neighbors as much as they loved their lap-dogs. It would be a fine thing for many a country squire if he loved his neighbors as much as he loved his pack of hounds. I think it might be a high pitch of virtue, if some of you were to love your neighbors as much as you love some favorite animal in your house. What an inferior grade of virtue, however, that appears to be! And yet it were something far superior to what some of you have attained to. You do not love your neighbor as you love your house, your estate, or your purse. How high then is, "Love thy neighbor as thyself" the gospel standard? How much does a man love himself? None of us too little, some of us too much. Thou mayest love thyself as much as thou pleasest, but take care that thou lovest thy neighbor as much. I am certain thou needest no exhortation to love thyself, thine own case will be seen to, thine own comfort will be a very primary theme of thine anxiety. Thou wilt line thine own nest well with downy feathers, if thou canst. There is no need to exhort thee to love thyself. Thou wilt do that well enough. Well, then, as much as thou lovest thyself love thy neighbor.

Christian Love Needed.— An evangelist brings into the congregation all the poor people of the district, and the very worst of characters gather to hear him. This ought to be a great joy, but in certain cases it is not. Many are offended, and in effect say, "'Not so, Lord.' Well, really, I — I — I do not like sitting next to one who is dressed so badly, and smells so vilely. I saw a woman of loose character come in, and I felt as if I must leave my pew." Oh, you very respectable people, you know that you get into that state of mind! You do not say

much about it when *we* hear you, because you know that it would not answer your purpose; yet you squeeze up against the corner of the pew to get away from the poor and needy. Do you not? If a man with a smock-frock, or with a dirty face, comes in here, you would just as soon that he should sit on the flaps in the aisle as sit in your seat, and a great deal sooner, I dare say. There is a great deal of that kind of feeling about, and it may be very natural, but it certainly betrays feebleness of Christian love.

MERCY

The Music of Mercy.— When loitering upon the Island of Liddo, off Venice, and listening to the sound of the city's bells, I thought the music charming as it floated across the lagune; but when I returned to the city, and sat down in the center of the music, in the very midst of all the bells, the sweetness changed to a horrible clash, the charming sounds were transformed into a maddening din; not the slightest melody could I detect in any one bell, while harmony in the whole company of noisemakers was out of the question. Distance had lent enchantment to the sound. The words of poets and eloquent writers may, as a whole, and heard from afar, sound charmingly enough; but how few of them bear a near and minute investigation! Their belfry rings passably, but one would soon weary of each separate bell. It is never so with the divine words of Jesus. You hear them ringing from afar and they are sweetness itself. When as a sinner, you roamed at midnight like a traveller lost on the wilds, how sweetly did they call you home! But now you have reached the house of mercy, you sit and listen to each distinct note of love's perfect peal, and wonderingly feel that even angelic harps cannot excel it.

The Stream of Mercy.— There is the stream of mercy, deep, broad, and clear: you have drunk of it, and are refreshed, but it is as full as ever. It will flow on, will it not? You do not suppose that you and I have dammed up the stream so as to keep it to ourselves. No, it is too strong, too full a stream for that. It will flow on from age to age. God will bless others as he has blessed us. Unbelief whispers that the true church will die out. Do not believe it. Christ will live, and his church will live with him till the heavens be no more. Hath he not said, "Because I live, ye shall live also?" "Oh," you say, "but we shall not see such holy men in the next generation as in past ages." Why not? I hope the next age will see far better men than any of those who are with us at this time. Pray that it may be so. Instead of the fathers, may there be the children, and may these be princes before the Lord!

Covenant Mercies.— I like to think of the old Scotchwoman, who not only blessed God for the porridge as she ate it, but thanked God that she had a covenant-right to the porridge. Daily mercies belong to the Lord's household by covenant-right; and that same covenant-right which will admit us into heaven above, also gives us bread and water here below. The trifles in the house, and the jewels of the house, equally belong to the children. We may partake of the common mercies of providence, and the extraordinary mercies of grace, without stint. None of the dainties of the royal house are locked up from the children. The Lord says to each believer, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." "Ye are Christ's and Christ is God," and therefore "all things are yours."

Mercy Through Christ.— Once on a time, Mercy sat upon her snow-white throne, surrounded by the troops of love. A sinner was brought before her, whom Mercy designed

to save. The herald blew the trumpet, and after three blasts thereof, with a loud voice, he said, "O heaven and earth, and hell, I summon you this day to come before the throne of Mercy, to tell why this sinner should not be saved." There stood the sinner, trembling with fear; he knew that there were multitudes of opponents, who would press into the hall of Mercy, and with eyes full of wrath, would say, "He must not, and he shall not escape; he must be lost!" The trumpet was blown, and Mercy sat placidly on her throne, until there stepped in one with a fiery countenance; his head was covered with light; he spoke with a voice like thunder, and out of his eyes flashed lightning! "Who art thou?" said Mercy. He replied, "I am Law; the law of God." "And what hast thou to say?" "I have this to say," and he lifted up a stony tablet, written on both sides; "these ten commands this wretch has broken. My demand is blood; for it is written, 'The soul that sinneth it shall die.' Die he, or Justice must." The wretch trembles, his knees knock together, the marrow of his bones melts within him, as if it were ice dissolved by fire, and he shakes with very fright. Already he thought he saw the thunderbolt launched at him, he saw the lightning penetrate into his soul, hell yawned before him in imagination, and he thought himself cast away for ever. But Mercy smiled, and said, "Law, I will answer thee. This wretch deserves to die; Justice demands that he should perish — I award thee thy claim." And, O! how the sinner trembles. "But there is one yonder who has come with me to-day, my King, my Lord; his name is Jesus; he will tell you how the debt can be paid, and the sinner can go free." Then Jesus spake, and said, "O Mercy, I will do thy bidding. Take me, Law; put me in a garden; make me sweat drops of blood; then nail me to a tree; scourge my back before you put me to

death; hang me on the cross; let blood run from my hands and feet; let me descend into the grave; let me pay all the sinner oweth; I will die in his stead." And the Law went out and scourged the Savior, nailed him to the cross, and coming back with his face all bright with satisfaction, stood again at the throne of Mercy, and Mercy said, "Law, what hast thou now to say?" "Nothing," said he; "fair angel, nothing." "What! not one of these commands against him?" "No, not one. Jesus, his substitute, has kept them all — has paid the penalty for his disobedience; and now, instead of his condemnation, I demand, as a debt of Justice, that he be acquitted." "Stand thou here," said Mercy; "sit on my throne; I and thou together will now send forth another summons." The trumpet rang again. "Come hither, all ye who have aught to say against this sinner, why he should not be acquitted;" and up comes another — one who often troubled the sinner — one who had a voice not so loud as that of the Law, but still piercing and thrilling — a voice whose whispers were like the cuttings of a dagger. "Who art thou?" says Mercy. "I am Conscience; this sinner must be punished; he has done so much against the law of God that he must be punished; I demand it; and I will give him no rest till he is punished, nor even then, for I will follow him even to the grave, and persecute him after death with pangs unutterable." "Nay," said Mercy, "hear me;" and while he paused for a moment, she took a bunch of hyssop and sprinkled Conscience with the blood, saying, "Hear me, Conscience, 'The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin.' Now has thou aught to say?" "No," said Conscience, "nothing —

"'Covered is his unrighteousness;
From condemnation he is free.'

Henceforth I will not grieve him; I will be a good conscience unto him, through the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ." The trumpet rang a third time, and growling from the innermost vaults, up there came a grim black fiend, with hate in his eyes, and hellish majesty on his brows. He is asked, "Hast thou anything against that sinner?" "Yes," said he, "I have; he has made a league with hell, and a covenant with the grave, and here it is, signed with his own hand. He asked God to destroy his soul in a drunken fit, and vowed he would never turn to God; see here is his covenant with hell!" "Let us look at it," said Mercy; and it was handed up, while the grim fiend looked at the sinner, and pierced him through with his black looks. "Ah! but," said Mercy, "this man had no right to sign the deed; a man must not sign away another's property. This man was bought and paid for long beforehand; he is not his own; the covenant with Death is disannulled, and the league with hell is rent in pieces. Go thy way, Satan." "Nay," said he, howling again, "I have something else to say: that man was always my friend; he listened ever to my insinuations; he scoffed at the gospel; he scorned the majesty of heaven: he is to be pardoned, while I repair to my hellish den, for ever to bear the penalty of guilt?" Said Mercy, "Avaunt, thou fiend; these things he did in the days of his unregeneracy; but this word 'nevertheless' blots them out. Go thou to thy hell; take this for another lash upon thyself — the sinner shall be pardoned, but thou — never, treacherous fiend!" And then Mercy, smilingly turning to the sinner, said, "Sinner, the trumpet must be blown for the last time!" Again it was blown, and no one answered. Then stood the sinner up, and Mercy said, "Sinner, ask thyself the question — ask thou of heaven, of earth, of hell — whether any can condemn thee?" And the sinner stood

up, and with a bold, loud voice, said, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" And he looked into hell, and Satan lay there, biting his iron bonds; and he looked on earth, and earth was silent; and in the majesty of faith the sinner did even climb to heaven itself, and he said, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? God?" And the answer came, "No; he justifieth." "Christ?" Sweetly it was whispered, "No; he died." Then turning round, the sinner joyfully exclaimed, "Who shall separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?" And the once condemned sinner came back to Mercy; prostrate at her feet he lay, and vowed henceforth to be hers for ever, if she would keep him to the end, and make him what she would desire him to be. Then no longer did the trumpet ring, but angels rejoiced, and heaven was glad, for the sinner was saved.

God's Mercy for All.— Let us divide these creatures once more. There were *creeping things,* and there were *flying things.* On the morning when the ark door was opened, you might have seen in the sky a pair of eagles, a pair of sparrows, a pair of vultures, a pair of ravens, a pair of humming-birds, a pair of all kinds of birds that ever cut the azure, that ever floated on wing, or whispered their song to the evening gales. In they came. But if you had watched down on the earth, you would have seen come creeping along a pair of snails, a pair of snakes, and a pair of worms. There ran along a pair of mice, there came a pair of lizards, and in there flew a pair of locusts. There were pairs of creeping creatures, as well as pairs of flying creatures. Do you see what I mean by that? There are some of you that can fly so high in knowledge, that I should never be able to scan your great and extensive wisdom; and others of you so ignorant, that you can hardly read your Bibles. Never

mind; the eagle must come down to the door, and you must go up to it. There is only one entrance for you all; and as God saved the birds that flew, so he saved the reptiles that crawled. Are you a poor, ignorant, crawling creature, that never was noticed — without intellect, without repute, without fame, without honor? Come along, crawling one! God will not exclude you. I have often wondered how the poor snail crawled in; but I dare say he started many a year before. And some of you have started for years, and still you keep crawling on. Ah! then, come along with thee, poor snail! If I could just pick thee up, and help thee on a yard or two, I would be glad to do it. It is strange how long you have been nigh to the ark, but not yet entered in; how long you have been near the portals of the church, but never joined it.

PEACE

The Peace of God.— There is Martin Luther standing up in the minds of the Diet of Worms; there are the kings and the princes, and there are the bloodhounds of Rome with their tongues thirsting for his blood — there is Martin rising in the morning as comfortable as possible, and he goes to the Diet, and delivers himself of the truth, solemnly declares that the things which he has spoken are the things which he believes, and God helping him, he will stand by them till the last. There is his life in his hands; they have him entirely in their power. The smell of John Huss's corpse has not yet passed away, and he recollects that princes before this have violated their words; but there he stands, calm and quiet; he fears no man, for he has naught to fear; "the peace of God which passeth all understanding" keeps his heart and mind through Jesus Christ. There is another scene: there is John Bradford in Newgate. He is

to be burned the next morning in Smithfield, and he swings himself on the bedpost in very glee, and delights, for to-morrow is his wedding-day; and he says to another, "Fine shining we shall make to-morrow, when the flame is kindled." And he smiles and laughs, and enjoys the very thought that he is about to wear the blood-red crown of martyrdom. Is Bradford mad? Ah, no; but he has got the peace of God that passeth all understanding.

A Peaceful Mind.— I compare not the peaceful mind to a lake without a ripple. Such a figure would be inadequate. The only comparison I can find is in that unbroken tranquility which seems to reign in the deep caverns and grottoes of the sea — far down where the sailor's body lies, where the sea-shells rest undisturbed, where there is nought but darkness, and where nothing can break the spell, for there are no currents there, and all is still — that is somewhat like the Christian's soul when God speaks to him. There may be billows on the surface, by these he may be sometimes ruffled, but inside the heart there will be no ebb or flow; he will have "eternal peace with God," a "peace that passeth all understanding," too deep to fathom, too perfect to conceive, for none but they who prove it know: such peace that you could to-night lay your head down to sleep with the knowledge that you would never wake again in this world as calmly as you could if you knew your days were like Hezekiah's, lengthened out for a certainty of fifteen years. When we have peace with God, we can lie down, and if an angel visited us to say, "Soul, your Master calls you," we could reply, "Tell my Master, I am ready. And if grim death were to come stalking to our bed-side, and were to say, "The pitcher is broken at the fountain, and the well is broken at the cistern: thou shalt die!" we might answer, "Die! we

die willingly; we are prepared; we are not afraid; we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; we have peace here, and we are willing to go and have that peace consummated up yonder in the better world."

Peace in Jesus Only.— I have heard of one who had been into the Enquiry Room a dozen times, and when on another occasion she was invited to go there she said, "I really do not know why I should go, for I have been told that I was saved twelve times already, and I am not a bit better than before they told me so." It would be better to send some home weeping rather than rejoicing. Many a wound needs the lancet more than the plaster. You may be comforted by well-meant assurances of tender friends, and yet that comfort may be all a lie. I therefore warn you against any peace except that which comes from doing that which Jesus commands, or in other words, against any confidence except that which rests in Jesus only, and is attended with repentance, faith, and a life of obedience to your Lord.

PRAYER

Empty Prayers.— You know that into the inward soul, and marrow, and bowels of devotion you have never yet learned to plunge. You know your devotion is like that ox which was slain once in the time of siege in Rome, and was said to portend ill, because when the augur slew it he declared he could not find a heart anywhere. He looked through all the entrails, and no heart could he discover; and hence, the Romans said their city must be destroyed. It was a solemn augury, they said, when the sacrifice had no heart in it. It is just the same with you. You have done all these things; oh! yes, and there has been as much reality in what you have done as there was devotion in the poor Kalmuck's windmill, when he tied the prayer to it, and put it up in the garden, and

every time it blew round, that was just one more prayer. There was as much heart in your prayer as there was in his windmill; that is to say, none at all. There it is! How far have you got? Go on no longer with this useless round of performances. I would not have you give the performances up. Stop awhile, and ask God to give you that inward spirit that quickeneth, for that is what is needed, "The flesh profiteth nothing."

Exaltation in Prayer.— I was much struck the other evening at a prayer-meeting, by the prayer of one of our brethren, which came home to my heart. When he prayed, he said, "O Lord, give me Mary's place —

> 'Oh! that I might, with Mary sit
> For ever at my Master's feet,
> And learn of him.'"

He prayed that he might have her part, and always sit at the feet of Jesus. But, by and by, the good man kindled up in his prayer, and said, "No, my Master, I have not asked enough of thee. Mary's place is too low for me, if I may have a better. Lift me up higher, Lord; give me John's place.

> 'Oh! that I might, with favored John,
> For ever lean my head upon
> The bosom of my Lord.'"

Then again he pleaded for that higher degree of communion between the soul and Christ. "Surely," thought I, "now you have asked enough." But, suddenly rising up to another flight on the wings of communion, like the eagle taking its last soar into the skies, he said, "No, Lord, John's place doth not suffice me. Thou hast lifted me from thy feet to thy bosom — now from thy bosom to thy lips." Then, quoting the words of the spouse — "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for thy

love is better than wine"— he sweetly paraphrased it thus, "Let the lip of my petitioning meet the lip of thy benediction; let the lip of my praise met the lip of thy acceptance; so shall the kiss be consummated and my joy be complete." Aye, and when we are favored to go through these stages of fellowship; to go from the foot to the bosom, from the bosom to the lip; to go from the mere learner and to be a friend and companion; and then to go higher still — to be lifted up and to feel our fellowship with Christ, by standing as high as he does, and being on his lip; it is there the child of God, insensibly almost, receives strength, and, like Elijah smitten by the angel, he rises up and finds his meat baked upon the coals, and eats thereof, and lives upon it for forty days to come. Precious mode of feeding this!

Revival Through Prayer.— All the mighty works of God have been attended with great prayer, as well as with great faith. Have ye ever heard of the commencement of the great American revival? A man, unknown and obscure, laid it up in his heart to pray that God would bless his country. After praying and wrestling and making the soul-stirring inquiry, "Lord, what wilt thou have *me* to do? Lord, what wilt thou have me *to do?*" he hired a room, and put up an announcement that there would be a prayer-meeting held there at such-and-such an hour of the day. He went at the proper hour, and there was not a single person there; he began to pray, and prayed for half an hour alone. One came in at the end of the half hour, and then two more, and I think he closed with six; the next week came round, and there might have been fifty dropped in at different times. At last the prayer-meeting grew to a hundred; then others began to start prayer-meetings; at last there was scarcely a street in New York that was without a prayer-meeting. Merchants found time to run in, in the middle

of the day, to pray. The prayer-meetings became daily ones, lasting for about an hour; petitions and requests were sent up: these were simply asked and offered before God, and the answers came; and many were the happy hearts that stood up and testified that the prayer offered last week had been already fulfilled. Then it was when they were all earnest in prayer, suddenly the Spirit of God fell upon the people, and it was rumored that in a certain village a preacher had been preaching in thorough earnest, and there had been hundreds converted in a week. The matter spread into and through the Northern States. These revivals of religion became universal, and it has been sometimes said, that a quarter of a million of people were converted to God through the short space of two or three months.

Praying for the Lost.— In one of Krummacher's beautiful little parables there is a story like this: "Abraham sat one day in the grove at Mamre, leaning his head on his hand, and sorrowing. Then his son Isaac came to him, and said, 'My father, why mournest thou? what aileth thee?' Abraham answered and said, 'My soul mourneth for the people of Canaan, that they know not the Lord, but walk in their own ways, in darkness and foolishness.' 'Oh, my father,' answered the son, 'is it only this?' Let not thy heart be sorrowful; for are not these their own ways?' Then the patriarch rose up from his seat, and said, 'Come now, follow me.' And he led the youth to a hut, and said to him, 'Behold.' There was a child which was imbecile, and the mother sat weeping by it. Abraham asked her, 'Why weepest thou?' Then the mother said, 'Alas, this my son eateth and drinketh, and we minister unto him; but he knows not the face of his father, nor of his mother. Thus his life is lost, and this source of joy is sealed to him.'" Is not that a sweet little parable, to teach us how we ought to pray for

the many sheep that are not yet of the fold, but which must be brought in? We ought to pray for them, because they do not know their Father. Christ has bought them, and they do not know Christ; the Father has loved them from before the foundation of the world, and yet they know not the face of their Father. When thou sayest "Our Father," think of the many of thy brothers and sisters that are in the back streets of London, that are in the dens and caves of Satan. Think of thy poor brother that is intoxicated with the spirit of the devil; think of him, led astray to infamy, and lust, and perhaps to murder, and in thy prayer pray thou for them who know not the Lord.

A Poor Woman's Throne.— I had an engraving sent to me the other day which pleased me beyond measure. It was an engraving simply but exquisitely executed. It represented a poor girl in an upper room, with a lean-to roof. There was a post driven in the ground, on which was a piece of wood, standing on which were a candle and a Bible. She was on her knees at a chair, praying, wrestling with God. Every thing in the room had on it the stamp of poverty. There was the mean coverlet to the old stump bedstead; there were the walls that had never been papered, and perhaps scarcely whitewashed. It was an upper story to which she had climbed with aching knees, and where, perhaps, she had worked away till her fingers were worn to the bone, to earn her bread at needle-work. There it was that she was wrestling with God. Some would turn away and laugh at it; but it appeals to the best feelings of man, and moves the heart far more than does the fine engraving of the monarch on his knees in the grand assembly.

A Spiritual Birth-place.— I knew a gray-headed old man, who was in the habit of doing this. He once took a boy to a certain tree, and said, "Now, John, you kneel

down at that tree, and I will kneel down with you." He knelt down and prayed, and asked God to convert him and save his soul. "Now," said he, "perhaps you will come to this tree again; and if you are not converted, you will remember that I asked under this tree that God would save your soul." That young man went away, and forgot the old man's prayer; but it chanced as God would have it that he walked down that field again, and saw a tree. It seemed as if the old man's name was cut in the bark. He recollected what he prayed for, and that the prayer was not fulfilled; but he dare not pass the tree without kneeling down to pray himself; and there was his spiritual birthplace. The simplest observation of the Christian shall be made a blessing, if God help him. "His leaf also shall not wither"— the simplest word he speaks shall be treasured up; "and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

The Pledge of Security.— I have heard an anecdote of two gentlemen travelling together, somewhere in Switzerland. Presently they came into the midst of the forests; and you know the gloomy tales the people tell about the inns there, how dangerous it is to lodge in them. One of them, an infidel, said to the other, who was a Christian, "I don't like stopping here at all; it is very dangerous indeed." "Well," said the other, "let us try." So they went into a house; but it looked so suspicious that neither of them liked it; and they thought they would prefer being at home in England. Presently the landlord said, "Gentlemen, I always read and pray with my family before going to bed; will you allow me to do so to-night?" "Yes," they said, "with the greatest pleasure." When they went up-stairs, the infidel said, "I am not at all afraid now." "Why?" said the Christian. "Because our host has prayed." "Oh!" said the other, "then it seems, after all, you think something of re-

ligion; because a man prays, you can go to sleep in his house." And it was marvelous how both of them did sleep. Sweet dreams they had, for they felt that where the house had been roofed by prayer, and walled with devotion, there could not be found a man living that would commit an injury to them.

Secret Prayer.— Mrs. Berry used to say, "I would not be hired out of my closet for a thousand worlds." Mr. Jay said, "If the twelve apostles were living near you, and you had access to them, if this intercourse drew you from the closet, they would prove a real injury to your souls." Prayer is the ship which bringeth home the richest freight. It is the soil which yields the most abundant harvest. Brother, when you rise in the morning your business so presses, that with a hurried word or two, down you go into the world, and at night, jaded and tired, you give God the fag end of the day. The consequence is, that you have no communion with him.

Won Through Prayer.— In one of the States of America there was an infidel who was a great despiser of God, a hater of the Sabbath and all religious institutions. What to do with him the ministers did not know. They met together and prayed for him. But among the rest, one Elder B—— resolved to spend a long time in prayer for the man; after that he got on horseback, and rode down to the man's forge, for he was a blacksmith. He left his horse outside, and said, "Neighbor, I am under very great concern about your soul's salvation; I tell you I pray day and night for your son's salvation." He left him, and rode home on his horse. The man went inside to his house, after a minute or two, and said to one of his infidel friends, "Here's a new argument; here's Elder B—— been down here, he did not dispute, and never said a word to me except this, 'I say, I am under great concern about your soul; I can not bear you

should be lost.' O! that fellow," he said, "I can not answer him;" and the tears began to roll down his cheeks. He went to his wife, and said, "I can't make this out; I never cared about my soul, but here's an elder, that has no connection with me, but I have always laughed at him, and he has come five miles this morning on horseback just to tell me he is under concern about my salvation." After a little while he thought it was time he should be under concern about his salvation too. He went in, shut the door, began to pray, and the next day he was at the deacon's house, telling him that he too was under concern about his salvation, and asking him to tell him what he must do to be saved.

Culture Through Prayer.— God's grace can save you, and then enlighten you. A brother minister once told me a story of a man who was known in a certain village as a simpleton, and was always considered to be soft in the head; no one thought he could ever understand any thing. But one day he came to hear the gospel preached. He had been a drunken fellow, having wit enough to be wicked, which is a very common kind of wit. The Lord was pleased to bless the Word to his soul, so that he became a changed character; and what was the marvel of all was, his religion gave him a something which began to develop his latent faculties. He found he had something to live for, and he began to try what he could do. In the first place he wanted to read his Bible, that he might read his Savior's name; and after much hammering and spelling away, at last he was able to read a chapter. Then he was asked to pray at a prayer-meeting; here was an exercise of his vocal powers. Five or six words made up his prayer, and down he sat abashed. But by continually praying in his own family at home, he came to pray like the rest of the brethren, and he went on till he became a preacher, and singular enough,

he had a fluency — a depth of understanding, and a power of thought, such as are seldom found among ministers who only occasionally occupy pulpits. Strange it was, that grace should even tend to develop his natural powers, giving him an object, setting him devoutly and firmly upon it, and so bringing out all his resources that they were fully shown. Ah, ignorant ones, ye need not despair. He saved them; not for *their* sakes — there was nothing in them why they should be saved. He saved them, not for their wisdom's sake; but, ignorant tho they were, understanding not the meaning of his miracles, "he saved them for his name's sake."

Weak Through Lack of Prayer.— I know Christian people who used to spend an hour a day in prayer. The hour has dwindled into five minutes. They used to be constant at week-night services. They very seldom gladden us with their presence now; and they are not as happy as they once were. I can read this riddle. If a man were to reduce his meals to eating once a week, we could not warrant his health. I would not guarantee that, if a man never ate except on Sundays, he would grow strong. So I do not think that people who neglect the means of grace, and give up their consecration, can expect to be lively, happy, or vigorous. When the razor gets to work, and the hair of conscience, resolute devotion to God begins to fall on the floor, lock after lock, the strength is departing: and only as that hair begins to grow again, and spiritual consecration returns, can these people expect to be useful, influential, and strong in the Lord.

Led by the Spirit in Prayer.— I was speaking to a brother yesterday about a prayer which my Lord had remarkably answered in my own case, and I could not help saying to him, "But I cannot always pray in that fashion. Not only can I not so pray, but I would not

dare to do so, even if I could." Moved by the Spirit of God, we sometimes pray with a power of faith which can never fail at the mercy-seat; but without such an impulse we must not push our own wills to the front. There are many occasions upon which, if one had all the faith which could move mountains, he would most wisely show it by saying nothing beyond, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Had our Lord chosen to do so, he had still in reserve a prayer-power which would have effectually saved him from his enemies. He did not think it right so to use it; but he could have done so had he pleased.

Scoffers at Prayer.— Those philosophers that sneer at prayer, what do they know about it? They are strangers to prayer, and therefore unable to judge of its power. Suppose a dozen of them should swear that they have prayed, and that God has not heard their prayers, we should believe it; and we should also come to the conclusion that prayers from men of their order ought not to be heard. Surely he that cometh to God must believe that he is; and these gentlemen will not even accept that point as certain. But when we pray, and the Lord hears us, can any form of argument disprove a fact? A fact will stand against all reasoning: it is an unyielding rock, against which the waves of skepticism hurl themselves in vain.

Telling Everything to Jesus.— I remember when once my young heart ached in boyhood, when I first loved the Savior. I was far away from father and mother, and all I loved, and I thought my soul would burst; for I was an usher in a school, in a place where I could meet with no sympathy or help. Well, I went to my chamber, and told my little griefs into the ears of Jesus. They were great griefs to me then, tho they are nothing now. When I just whispered them on my knees into the

ear of him who had loved me with an everlasting love, oh! it was so sweet, none can tell. If I had told them to somebody else, they would have told them again; but he, my blessed confidant, he knows my secrets, and he never tells them. Oh! what can you do that have got no Jesus to tell your troubles to?

Praying for Special Things.— When we pray, we should make a point of praying for something distinctly. There is a general kind of praying, which fails from want of precision. It is as if a regiment of soldiers should all fire off their guns anyhow; possibly somebody would be killed, but the majority of the enemy would be missed. I believe that at the battle of Waterloo, there were no arms of precision, they had only the old Brown Bass, and tho the battle was won, it has been said it took as much lead to kill a man as the weight of the man's body. This is a figure of the comparative failure of indistinct, generalizing prayer. If you pray anyhow, if it be with sincerity, a measure of blessing results from it; but it will take a great deal of such praying to accomplish much. But if you plead for certain mercies definitely and distinctly, with firm unstaggering faith, you shall richly succeed.

Definite Aim in Prayer.— If a man were using his rifle at Wimbledon in a contest for a prize, if he were told, "It is not that target on the right, but this upon the left which must be aimed at," if he would continue to shoot towards the right, even tho he should make a center, yet he would not have scored; inasmuch as that was not the target appointed in the competition, his best shots would count for nothing. When a man does not pray in the Lord's appointed way, nor through Jesus Christ, nor in dependence upon the Holy Spirit, he does not pray at all. However fine his prayer, it is only a splendid sin. If you employ a servant to do a work, and he obstinately

persists in doing another thing, he will not earn his wages. However industriously he works at what you have never set him to do, he will receive nothing at your hands. So if you pray to God in a way which God has never ordained, if you refuse to use the name which he has appointed, if you neglect the cultivation of that holy and humble spirit which the Lord will alone accept, you may pray till your tongue cleaves to the roof of your mouth; but in God's judgment you have not prayed at all, and you will not receive anything of the Lord.

Prayer About Common Mercies.— Tho your prayer should only be about worldly things, and be nothing more than a merely natural prayer, yet pray it; for "He heareth the young ravens when they cry," and I am sure they do not pray spiritual prayers. All that ravens can ask for will be worms and flies, and yet he hears them, and feeds them; and you, a man, tho you may but pray at this time for a very commonplace mercy, one of the slighter blessings, yet you may pray with confidence if you have any faith in the gracious Lord.

Praying for Our Friends.— Does it astonish you that a man so rich in grace as Paul should be asking prayers of these unknown saints? It need not astonish you; for it is the rule with the truly great to think most highly of others. In proportion as a man grows in grace he feels his dependence upon God, and, in a certain sense, his dependence upon God's people. He decreases in his own esteem, and his brethren increase in his estimation. A flourishing tradesman, a man who has a large business, is the man who needs others, he prospers by setting others to labor on his behalf; the larger his trade, the more he is dependent upon those around him. The apostle was, so to speak, a great master-trader for the Lord Jesus; he did a great business for his Lord, and he felt that he could not carry it on unless he had the cooperation of

many helpers. He did not so much want what employers harshly call "hands" to work for him, but he did need hearts to plead for him, and he therefore sent all the way to Rome to seek such assistance. He wrote to those whom he had never seen, and begged their prayers, as if he pleaded for his life.

Frequent Prayer.— I had a dear friend whose company I esteemed, but on a sudden he did not come to see me. He stayed away; and as I knew he had not ceased to love me, I wondered why. At last I found that the good brother had taken it into his head that he might outrun his welcome: he had read those words of Solomon, "Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbor's house; lest he be weary of thee, and so hate thee." I admired my friend's prudence, but I labored hard to make him see that Solomon knew nothing of *me*, and that I was more wearied when he stopped away than when he came. I hope he made *me* an exception to a very sensible rule. But never get that thought into your head concerning your God. Will you weary my God also? You may weary him by restraining prayer, but never by abounding in supplication. Abide with your God, and cry to him day and night, and let this be the music of your whole life, "Whereunto I may continually resort."

Heaven's Gate Always Open to the Praying Christian.— The Persian kings forbade any one to come near them; and if any ventred into the king's court, and the monarch did not stretch out the silver scepter, the guards cut them down at once. Yet there were certain favored courtiers who, by special privilege, had the right to approach the king at all times, guard or no guard. These were the noblest in the king's dominions. Such honor have all the saints. No cherub with flaming sword guards the way of aproach to God against any child of the great Father.

A Futile Prayer.— It has been well observed by an old divine, that the man who pleads his own merit does not pray, but demands his due. If I ask a man to pay me a debt, I am not a suppliant, but a plaintiff claiming my rights. The prayer of a man who thinks he is meritorious is like serving the Lord with a writ: it is not offering a request, it is issuing a demand. Merit in effect says, "Pay me that thou owest." Little will such a man get of God.

Paying and Praying.— I was reading the story of a good old deacon in Maine, in America, who came in to a meeting after there had been a missionary collection. The minister there and then asked "our good brother Sewell" to pray. Sewell did not pray, but thrust his hand in his pocket and stood fumbling about. "Bring the box," he said; and when the box came, and he had put his money into it, the minister said, "Brother Sewell, I did not ask you to give anything, I only wished you to pray." "Oh," said he, "I could not pray till I had first given something." He felt obliged first to do something for the great mission work, and having done that he could pray for it. Oh, that all Christ's people felt the justice of that course of conduct!

A Prayerless Man.— You may be a very rich man, and have large estates, but I would sooner occupy the place of the poorest believing pauper in the workhouse than take your position without a God and without a throne of grace. How do people live that have no God to go to? If a man were to say to me, "I never get a morsel of bread to eat at all," I should wonder how he lived. But when a man says, "I never pray, and God never hears me," I am in equal wonder.

God Listening to Prayer.— A good brother of my acquaintance, a minister of the gospel, going to preach from the text that God will hear prayer, called upon one

of his poor people, who said when the visit was over that she had greatly enjoyed his call. He thought to himself, "I have scarcely said a word, and yet she says that I have done her good." Turning to her, he inquired, "Sister, how can I have done you good, for I have hardly spoken with you?" "Ah, sir," she replied, "you have listened so kindly: you have heard all I had to say, and there are very few who will do that." Just so. People in deep trouble like somebody to hear them all through: even little children are comforted by telling mother all about it. We are in such a hurry with poor troubled spirits that we hasten them on to the end of the sentence, and try to make them skip the dreary details. But to them this seems unkind, for their story is sacred; and therefore, they go slowly on with it, till we are quite tired. I have often hurried on a poor despondent creature till I have seen the uselessness of it: it is always best to let them spin on. It does them good. To tell out the heart to a patient listener is a great relief to a burdened spirit, and the heart must do it in its own way. Here is a sweet assurance, "My God will hear me." I may be very bad, and what I say may be very broken, and I may groan a good deal, and I may say the same thing over and over again, and my whole ditty may be very stupid; but, "My God will hear me." He is in no hurry: he is the God of patience. He will listen to my dreary talk, and endure each gloomy particular. I need not hold him as the Ancient Mariner held the wedding guest who was unwilling to hear his weary rhyme of the sea: my God will willingly listen to me right through, from beginning to end, groans and all. "My God will hear me."

Persistent Prayer.— "Oh!" say you, "I have been praying." Yes, but a tree does not always drop its fruit at the first shake you give it. Shake it again, man; give it

another shake! And sometimes when the tree is loaded, and is pretty firm in the earth, you have to shake it to and fro, and at last you plant your feet, and get hold of it, and shake it with might and main, till you strain every muscle and sinew to get the fruit down. And that is the way to pray. Shake the tree of life until the mercy drops into your lap. Christ loves for men to beg hard. You cannot be too importunate. That which might be disagreeable to your fellow-creatures when you beg of them, will be agreeable to Christ. Oh! get ye to your chambers; get ye to your chambers, ye that have not found Christ! To your bed-sides, to your little closets, and "seek the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near!" May the Spirit of God constrain you to pray. May he constrain you to continue in prayer. Jesus must hear you. The gate of heaven is open to the sturdy knocker that affirms he will not take a denial.

Praying for Individuals.— I remember George Whitfield says when he began to pray, his first prayer was that God would convert those with whom he used to play at cards and waste his Sundays. "And blessed be God," he says, "I got every one of them."

PREACHER

The Power of a Definite Purpose.— No man becomes eminent in any pursuit unless he gives himself up to it with all the powers and passions of his nature — body and soul. Michael Angelo had never been so great a painter if his love of art had not become so enthusiastic that he frequently did not take off his garments to sleep by the week together; nor had Handel ever been such a great musician if his ardor for sounds celestial had not led him to use the keys of his harpsichord till, by constant finger-

ing, they became the shape of spoons. A man must have one pursuit, and consecrate all his powers to one purpose, if he would excel or rise to eminence among his fellows.

Meditation.— Meditation is to the soul what oil was to the body of the wrestlers. When those old athletes went out to wrestle, they always took care before they went to oil themselves well — to make their joints supple and fit for labor. Now, meditation makes the soul supple — makes it so that it can use things when they come into the mind. Who are the men that can go into a controversy and get the mastery? Why, the men who meditate when they are alone. Who are the men that can preach? Not those who gad about and never commune with their own hearts alone; but those who think earnestly, as well when no one is near them as when there is a crowd around them. Who are the authors who write your books, and keep up the constant supply of literature? They are meditative men. They keep their bones supple and their limbs fit for exercise by continually bathing themselves in the oil of meditation. How important, therefore, is meditation as a mental exercise, to have our minds in constant readiness for any service.

Saved by a Stray Sermon.— Many a sailor boy has been wild, reckless, Godless, Christless, and at last has got into a foreign hospital. Ah, if his mother knew that he was down with the yellow fever, how sad her mind would be, for she would conclude that her dear son will die away at Havana, or somewhere, and never come home again. But it is just in that hospital that God means to meet with him. A sailor writes to me something like that. He says, "My mother asked me to read a chapter every day, but I never did. I got into the hospital at Havana, and, when I lay there, there was a man near to me who was dying, and he died one night; but before he

died he said to me, 'Mate, could you come here? I want to speak to you. I have got something that is very precious to me here. I was a wild fellow, but reading this packet of sermons has brought me to the Savior, and I am dying with a good hope through grace. Now, when I am dead and gone, will you take these sermons and read them, and may God bless them to you. And will you write a letter to the man that preached and printed those sermons, to tell him that God blessed them to my conversion and that I hope he will bless them to yourself?'" It was a packet of my sermons and God did bless them to that young man who, I have no doubt whatever, went to that hospital because there a man who had been brought to Christ would hand to him the words which God had blessed to himself and would bless to his friend. You do not know, dear mother, you do not know. The worst thing that can happen to a young man in this world is sometimes the best thing that can happen to him.

The True Preacher.— In the old romance, they tell us that at a gate of a certain noble hall there hung a horn, and none could blow that horn but the true heir to the castle and its wide domains. Many tried it. They could make sweet music on other instruments; they could wake the echoes by other bugles; but that horn was mute, let them blow as they might. At last, the true heir came, and when he set his lips to the horn, shrill was the sound and indisputable his claim. He who can preach Christ is the true minister. Let him preach anything else in the world, he has not proved his calling; but if he shall preach Jesus and the resurrection, he is in the apostolical succession. If Christ crucified be the great delight of his soul, the very marrow of his teaching, the fatness of his ministry, he has proved his calling as an ambassador of Christ.

Magnifying the Ministry.— We find the most eminent of God's servants frequently magnifying their office as preachers of the gospel. Whitfield was wont to call his pulpit his throne; and when he stood upon some rising knoll to preach to the thousands gathered in the open air, he was more happy than if he had assumed the imperial purple, for he ruled the hearts of men more gloriously than doth a king. When Dr. Carey was laboring in India, and his son Felix had accepted the office of ambassador to the king of Burmah, Carey said, "Felix has drivelled into an ambassador"— as tho he looked upon the highest earthly office as an utter degradation if for it the minister of the gospel forsook his lofty vocation. Paul blesses God that this great grace was given to him, that he might preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; he looked upon it not as toil, but as a grace.

Christ in the Sermon.— A young man had been preaching in the presence of a venerable divine, and after he had done he went to the old minister, and said, "What do you think of my sermon?" "A very poor sermon, indeed," said he. "A poor sermon?" said the young man, "it took me a long time to study it." "Ay, no doubt of it." "Why, did you not think my explanation of the text a very good one?" "Oh, yes," said the old preacher, "very good, indeed." "Well, then, why do you say it is a poor sermon? Didn't you think the metaphors were appropriate, and the arguments conclusive?" "Yes, they were very good as far as that goes, but still it was a very poor sermon." "Will you tell me why you think it a poor sermon?" "Because," said he, "there was no Christ in it." "Well," said the young man, "Christ was not in the text; we are not to be preaching Christ always, we must preach what is in the text." So the old man said, "don't you know, young man, that from every town,

and every village, and every little hamlet in England, wherever it may be, there is a road to London?" "Yes," said the young man. "Ah!" said the old divine, "and so from every text of Scripture, there is a road to the metropolis of the Scriptures, that is, Christ. And, my dear brother, your business is, when you get to a text, to say, 'Now what is the road to Christ?' and then preach a sermon, running along the road towards the great metropolis — Christ. And," said he, "I have never yet found a text that had not got a road to Christ in it, and if ever I do find one that has not got a road to Christ in it, I will make one; I will go over hedge and ditch but I would get at my Master, for the sermon cannot do any good unless there is a savor of Christ in it."

Lying on the Promises.—

> None but Jesus! None but Jesus
> Can do helpless sinners good!"

It is simple reliance on him which saves. The negro said, "Massa, I fall flat on de promise;" so if you fall flat on the promise of Jesus, you shall not find him fail you; he will bind up your heart, and make an end to the days of your mourning.

Sermons Born of Feeling.— It is a long time since I have made a good speech at a public meeting; but I do remember doing it once. I stepped out, as one of the speakers was delivering a very, very pretty oration, and I went into a neighboring house to speak with a woman who wished to join the church. It was not in London. When I stepped into the house, there was the husband beastly drunk; he had got his wife up in a corner, and was with all his might trying to bruise her face, and tear her arms with his nails, till the blood flowed from her arms and face. Two or three rushed in, and dragged him away. She said she had endeavored with all her meek-

ness to persuade him to allow her to go to the house of God that night; and the only reason why he ill-treated her was, because he said she would always be going to that place of worship. And when I had seen this sight, and looked on the poor woman, with tears in her eyes, I went into the place, and spoke like a man who had got his face and heart, and whole body, full of fire. I could not help it: I was all on flame against the sin of drunkenness, and sought with all my might to urge the members of the church to do all they could to scatter the light of the Gospel into a neighborhod which was so dark and black and filthy and abandoned. And I think it would do all of us good, when we preach, if we were sometimes to be dragged through some of the worst parts of London, to let us see the wickedness of it.

Keep the Light Burning.— Truly, the minister of Christ will feel like the old keeper of Eddystone lighthouse; life was failing fast, but summoning all his strength, he crept round once more to trim the lights before he died. O may the Holy Spirit enable us to keep the beacon-fire blazing, to warn you of the rocks, shoals, and quicksands, which surround you, and may we ever guide you to Jesus.

A Preacher Converted.— You remember Rowland's Hill's Story in "The Village Dialogues," about Mr. Merriman. Mr. Merriman was a sad scapegrace of a preacher; he was to be seen at every fair and revel, and used seldom to be found in his pulpit when he should have been; but when he was converted, he began to preach with tears running down his face — and how the church began to be crowded! The squire would not go and hear any of that stuff, and locked up his pew; and Mr. Merriman had a little ladder made outside the door, as he did not wish to break the door open; and the people used to sit on the steps, up one side and down the other, so that it made

twice as much room for the people who chose to come as there was before.

A Child's Religion.— A dear little girl, some five or six years old, a true lover of Jesus, requested of her mother that she might join the church. The mother told her she was too young. The poor little thing was grieved exceedingly; and after awhile the mother, who saw that piety was in her heart, spoke to the minister on the subject. The minister talked to the child, and said to the mother, "I am thoroughly convinced of her piety, but I cannot take her into the church, she is too young." When the child heard that, a strange gloom passed over her face; and the next morning when her mother went to her little bed she lay with a pearly tear or two on each eye, dead for very grief; her heart was broken, because she could not follow her Savior, and do as he had bidden her. I would not have murdered that child for a world! Take care how you treat young piety. Be tender of it. Believe that children can be saved as much as yourselves. When you see the young heart brought to the Savior, don't stand by and speak harshly, mistrusting everything. It is better sometimes to be deceived than to be the means of ruining one. God send to his people a more firm belief that little buds of grace are worthy of all care.

Sad Results of Careless Conduct.— There was a young minister once preaching very earnestly in a certain chapel, and he had to walk some four or five miles to his home along a country road after service. A young man, who had been deeply impressed under the sermon, requested the privilege of walking with the minister, with an earnest hope that he might get an opportunity of telling out his feelings to him, and obtaining some word of guidance or comfort. Instead of that, the young minister all the way along told the most singular tales to those who were with him, causing loud roars of laughter, and even relating

tales which bordered upon the indecorous. He stopped at a certain house, and this young man with him, and the whole evening was spent in frivolity and foolish talking. Some years after, when the minister had grown old, he was sent for to the bedside of a dying man. He hastened thither with a heart desirous to do good. He was requested to sit down at the bedside; and the dying man, looking at him, and regarding him most closely, said to him, "Do you remember preaching in such and such a village on such an occasion?" "I do," said the minister. "I was one of your hearers," said the man, "and I was deeply impressed by the sermon." "Thank God for that," said the minister. "Stop!" said the man, "don't thank God till you have heard the whole story; you will have reason to alter your tone before I have done." The minister changed countenance, but he little guessed what would be the full extent of that man's testimony. Said he, "Sir, do you remember, after you had finished that earnest sermon, I with some others walked home with you? I was sincerely desirous of being led in the right path that night; but I heard you speak in such a strain of levity, and with so much coarseness, too, that I went outside the house, while you were sitting down to your evening meal; I stamped my foot upon the ground; I said that you were a liar, that Christianity was a falsehood; that if you could pretend to be so in earnest about it in the pulpit, and then come down and talk like that, the whole thing must be a sham; and I have been an infidel," said he, "a confirmed infidel, from that day to this. But I am not an infidel at this moment; I know better; I am dying, and I am about to be damned; and at the bar of God I will lay my damnation to your charge; my blood is on your head;"— and with a dreadful shriek, and one demoniacal glance at the trembling minister, he shut his eyes and died.

A Sermon That Went to the Mark.— I have heard of a woman, who, when she was asked what she remembered of the minister's sermon, said, "I don't recollect anything of it. It was about short weights and bad measures, and I didn't recollect anything but to go home and burn the bushel."

Hiding Behind Christ.— I recollect a story told by William Dawson, whom our Wesleyan friends used to call Billy Dawson, one of the best preachers that ever entered a pulpit. He once gave out as his text, "Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." When he had given out his text he dropped down to the bottom of the pulpit, so that nothing could be seen of him, only there was a voice heard saying, "Not the man in the pulpit, he is out of sight, but the Man in the Book. The Man described in the Book is the Man through whom is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."

Too Much Red Tape.— Mr. Rowland Hill was said to have ridden on the back of all order and decorum. "No," he said, "I cannot ride on the back of two horses, but I have two horses to my carriage, and I have called one of them 'Order,' and the other 'Decorum,' to make the report come as nearly right as possible." Order and Decorum were never put to a better use than when they drew Mr. Rowland Hill from town to town preaching the gospel; and I, for one, am glad that he never took those horses into the pulpit. He was just as disorderly and indecorous as a Christian man ought to be — that is to say, he was perfectly natural, and spoke the truth from his heart, and men that heard it felt the power of it; and so he became a blessing to this part of London, and indeed, to the whole world. Shake yourself up a little, my brother. If you are too precise may the Lord set you on fire, and consume your bonds of red tape! If you have become so improperly proper that you can-

not commit a proper impropriety, then pray God to help you to be less proper, for there are many who will never be saved by your instrumentality while you study propriety.

A Word in Season.— A smith was blowing his bellows one day, when the saintly McCheyne stepped into the smithy for shelter from a shower of rain. As the smith was blowing the coals and they were at a great heat, he simply said to him, "What does that fire make you think of?" He never waited for an answer, but went his way. It made the smith think of the wrath to come, and it made him flee from it too. We cannot tell what may be, in the gracious providence of God, the means of bringing you to decision. He that used an angel's hand with Lot, can use a well-timed observation with you. Therefore, I urge all Christian people that they use every opportunity, and study to season their conversation with grace. Sow beside all waters, for you know which may prosper, this or that.

A Dumb Dog.— I have heard of a minister who preached for several years before he was converted, and when converted he became a very earnest preacher of the gospel; but one day as he rode along the street he was observed to stop and cane a dog which was lying in front of a door. When they said to him, "Mr. McPhayle, why did you beat the dog?" he said, "He was so exactly like myself, lying in the sun sleeping — a dumb dog that didn't bark — that I could not but give him a touch of the rod; tho I meant it all the while for myself."

Fishing but Never Catching.— If a minister can be content to go on preaching without converts or baptisms, the Lord have mercy upon his miserable soul! Can he be a minister of Christ who does not win souls? A man might as well be a huntsman and never take any prey, a fisherman and always come home with empty nets, a

husbandman and never reap a harvest! I wonder at some people's complacency. When God never blesses them they never fail to bless themselves. "Divine sovereignty withholds the increase," they say. But it really is their idleness that tends to poverty. The promise of God is to the diligent, not the indolent. Let Paul plant, and let Apollos water, God will give the increase. It may not come to-day, nor to-morrow, nor the next day, but come it must. The word cannot return unto God void.

A Faithful Messenger.— Do you send a servant to the door of a neighbor with a message? If the person at the door should be angry, the servant would say, "It is of no use being angry with me; you must be angry with my master, for I have given you the message just as he gave it to me." And if they should be angry with him, he would say, "I would much rather that the stranger at the door should be angry with me for telling the message than that my master should be angry with me for keeping it back, for to my master I stand or fall." I think the minister of God, if he has preached faithfully, may say, "Well, I have delivered only what my Master told me; if you are angry with me you must remember that you ought to be angry with my Master, for it was my Master's message, and it is better for *you* to be angry with me than for *my Master* to be angry with me."

The Preacher God's Messenger to the Conscience.— I am afraid, there are some ministers who hardly think that the gospel is intended to come personally home to the people. They talk, as I read of one the other day, who said, that when he preached to sinners he did not like to look the congregation in the face, for fear they should think he meant to be personal, so he looked up at the ventilator, because there was no fear then of any individual catching his eye. Oh! that fear of man has been

the ruin of many ministers. They never dared to preach right at the people. We have heard of sermons being preached before this and that honorable company; but preaching sermons before people is not God's way; we must preach sermons at the people, directly to them, to show that it is not the waving of a sword in the air like a juggler's sport, but it is the getting the sword right into the conscience and the heart. This, I take it, is the true mission of every minister of Christ. It is said of Whitefield, that if you were the farthest away from him in a throng, where you could but hear the sound of his voice, you felt persuaded that he meant to speak to you; and of Rowland Hill it is said, that if you got into Surrey Chapel you could not hide in a corner there; tho you should manage to get into a back seat, or were squeezed tight into the windows, you would still feel persuaded that Mr. Hill was addressing you, and that he had singled you out for his expostulations. Surely this is the perfection of preaching.

PRIDE

Insidious Flattery.— Praise is a thing we all love. I met with a man the other day who said he was impervious to flattery; I was walking with him at the time, and turning round rather sharply, I said, "At any rate, sir, you seem to have a high gift in flattering yourself, for you are really doing so, in saying you are impervious to flattery." "You cannot flatter me," he said. I replied, "I can, if I like to try; and perhaps may do so before the day is out." I found I could not flatter him directly, so I began by saying what a fine child that was of his; and he drank it in as a precious draught; and when I praised this thing and that thing belonging to him, I could see that he was very easily flattered; not directly, but indirectly. We are all pervious to flat-

tery; we like the soothing cordial, only it must not be labeled flattery; for we have a religious abhorrence of flattery if it be so called; call it by any other name, and we drink it in, even as the ox drinketh in water.

Wicked Pride.— I have heard of a lady who was visited by a minister on her deathbed, and she said to him, "I want to ask you one question, now I am about to die." "Well," said the minister, "what is it?" "Oh!" said she, in a very affected way, "I want to know if there are two places in heaven, because I could not bear that Betsy in the kitchen should be in heaven along with me, she is so unrefined?" The minister turned round and said, "O! don't trouble yourself about that, madam. There is no fear of that; for, until you get rid of your accursed pride, you will never enter heaven at all." We must all get rid of our pride. We must come down and stand on an equality in the sight of God, and see in every man a brother, before we can hope to be found in glory."

Danger of Self Confidence.— Did you ever hear of a captain of a vessel driven about by rough winds who wanted anchorage and tried to find it on board his vessel? He desires to place his anchor somewhere on board the ship where it will prove a hold-fast. He hangs it at the prow, but still the ship drives: he exhibits the anchor upon deck, but that does not hold the vessel; at last he puts it down into the hold; but with no better success. Why, man alive, anchors do not hold as long as they are on board a ship. They must be thrown into the deep, and then they will get a grip of the sea-bottom, and hold the vessel against wind and tide. As long as ever you have confidence in yourselves, you are like a man who keeps his anchor on board his boat, and you will never come to a resting-place. Over with your faith into the great deeps of eternal love and power, and trust in

the infinitely faithful One. Then shall you be glad because your heart is quiet. Stay yourself upon your God, because he commands you so to do. Do not dare to hesitate.

Need of God's Help.— In olden times a warrior was going forth to battle for his country, and a certain preacher of the word said to him, "My prayer is made continually for you that you may be victorious." The warrior, in his philosophic doubt, replied that he saw no use in the promised prayers; for if God had determined to give him victory, he would have it without prayer; and if fate had decreed that he should be defeated, prayers could not prevent it. To which the godly man very properly replied, "Then take off your helmet and your coat of mail, and hang up your sword and buckler. Go not forth to battle at all with your men-at-arms; for, indeed, if the Lord is to conquer your enemies he can do it without your weapons, and if he will not prosper you, it will then be in vain for you to mount your war-horse."

Danger of Pride.— I remember a story told me by a dear brother, who is present with us now. A tradesman who held office in the church asked him for a loan of money. Tho rather inconvenient he was about to comply, and would have done so had not some such inducement as this been offered —"You know you may safely advance this money to me, for I am incorruptible. I am not young; I am past temptation." Thereupon my friend promptly declined, as he did not like the security. The result justified his shrewdness. At that very time the borrower knew he was on the verge of bankruptcy, and, ere long, was actually a bankrupt, and yet he could pretend to say he was above temptation. Above all, avoid those men who think themselves immaculate, and never fear a fall.

THE PROMISES

Pleading God's Promises.— Some one has given you a promise, that if you are in need and go to him, he will give whatever you want. You go up to his door, you knock timidly; and when he comes to meet you, you rush into the street and hide yourself, for you are ashamed that he should see you. Driven by necessity, however, you knock again; at last he comes, and you stand trembling before him. "Well," says he, "what do you want?" "You have given me a promise, sir, that when I am in need you will do so-and-so for me, and I really do not believe it. I have no confidence in you, and I do not like to ask." There would be nothing honorable in that to any man. How far different was the example of Alexander's courtier. The king said to him, "I will give to thee whatever thou requesteth;" and the man asked such a gift as almost emptied Alexander's coffers. "Ay," says the monarch, "it was a great thing for him to ask, but it is only a little thing for Alexander to give. I like the man's confidence in me, using my word to its fullest extent." Now when the believer goes to his closet and bows there with his feeble knee, and asks God to bless him, and does not half believe that he will, he dishonors God. But when a man goes up to his chamber, saying in his heart, "There is something that I want, and I am going to get it;" and he falls on his knees, and cries, "Lord, thou knowest all things: thou knowest that such a thing is necessary to me; there is thy promise; 'do as thou hast said,' Lord; I know thou wilt give it me." And when he rises from his knees, and goes down and says to his friend, "The blessing will come; I have asked for it; I have prayed the prayer of faith, and God will hear me;" why, such a man honors God. I would remind you again of a

great proof of all this. Look at Mr. Müller, at Ashley-down, near Bristol. Could he have built that house for orphans if he had a weak hand and a feeble knee? No. But he had a strong hand; he meant to serve his God by feeding and clothing orphans. On the other hand he had a strong knee. "Lord," he said, "I will do this enterprise — give me the means to do it." And he went to God, and did not doubt that he would do it. And, lo! thousands have rolled into his treasury, and he has never known lack; and now, seven hundred children live under his care, and are fed and clothed to the honor of God. Let us also seek to have strong hands and mighty knees, and so shall we honor God.

God Speaking Through the Preacher.— A City Missionary, when going round the West end of the town, met a poor man, of whom he asked this question: "Do you know Mr. Spurgeon?" He found him reading a sermon. "Yes," he said, "I have every reason to know him; I have been to hear him, and under God's grace I have become a new man. But," said he, "shall I tell you how it was? I went to the Music Hall, and took my seat in the middle of the place, and the man looked at me as if he knew me, and deliberately told the congregation that I was a shoemaker, and that I sold shoes on a Sunday; and I did, sir. But, sir, I should not have minded that; but he said I took ninepence the Sunday before, and that there was fourpence profit; and so I did take ninepence, and fourpence was just the profit, and how he should know that I'm sure I cannot tell. It struck me it was God had spoken to my soul through him; and I shut my shop last Sunday, and was afraid to open it and go there, lest he should split about me again." I could tell as many as a dozen authentic stories of cases that have happened in this Hall, where I have deliberately pointed at somebody, without the slightest knowl-

edge of the person, or ever having in the least degree any inkling or idea that what I said was right, except that I was moved thereto by the Spirit; and so striking has been the description, that the persons have gone away and said, "Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did: he was sent of God to my soul, beyond a doubt, or else he could not have painted my case so clearly."

God's Promises.— "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." Climb up that creaking staircase to the top of thy house, lie down on thy hard mattress, wrap thyself round with a blanket, look out for the winter when hard times are coming, and say, "What shall I do?" But, then, just hum over to thyself these words, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." That will be like the hush of a lullaby to your poor soul, and you will soon sink to slumber. Go, thou business man, to thy counting-house again, after this little hour of recreation in God's house, again to cast up those wearisome books. Thou art saying, "How about business? These prices may be my ruin. What shall I do?" When thou hast cast up thine accounts, put this down against all thy fears, and see what a balance it will leave —"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." There is another man. He does not lack anything, but still he feels that some great loss may injure him considerably. Go and write this down in thy cash-book. If thou hast made out thy cash-account truly, put this down: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want;" put that down for something better than pounds, shillings and pence, something better than gold and silver. "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." "Ah!" says the cold, calculating man, "your promise is not worth having, sir." No; it would not, if it were my promise. But fortunately it is not. It is God's promise.

PROPHECY

A Marvelous Prophecy.— I wish to bear a personal testimony by narrating an incident in my own life. I have been preaching in Essex this week, and I took the opportunity to visit the place where my grandfather preached so long, and where I spent my earliest days. Last Wednesday was to me a day in which I walked like a man in a dream. Everybody seemed bound to recall some event or other of my childhood. What a story of divine love and mercy did it bring before my mind! Among other things, I sat down in a place that must ever be sacred to me. There stood in my grandfather's manse garden two arbors made of yew trees, cut into sugar-loaf fashion. Tho the old manse has given way to a new one, and the old chapel has gone also, yet the yew trees flourish as aforetime. I sat down in the right hand arbor and bethought me of what had happened there many years ago. When I was a young child staying with my grandfather, there came to preach in the village Mr. Knill, who had been a missionary at St. Petersburg, and a mighty preacher of the gospel. He came to preach for the London Missionary Society, and arrived on the Saturday at the manse. He was a great soul-winner, and he soon spied out the boy. He said to me, "Where do you sleep? for I want to call you up in the morning." I showed him my little room. At six o'clock he called me up, and we went into that arbor. There, in the sweetest way, he told me of the love of Jesus, and of the blessedness of trusting in him and loving him in our childhood. With many a story he preached Christ to me, and told me how good God had been to him, and then he prayed that I might know the Lord and serve him. He knelt down in that arbor and prayed for me with his arms about my neck. He did not

seem content unless I kept with him in the interval between the services, and he heard my childish talk with patient love. On Monday morning he did as on the Sabbath, and again on Tuesday. Three times he taught me and prayed with me, and before he had to leave, my grandfather had come back from the place where he had gone to preach, and all the family were gathered to morning prayer. Then, in the presence of them all, Mr. Knill took me on his knee, and said, "This child will one day preach the gospel, and he will preach it to great multitudes. I am persuaded that he will preach in the chapel of Rowland Hill, where (I think he said) I am now the minister." He spoke very solemnly, and called upon all present to witness what he said. Then he gave me sixpence as a reward if I would learn the hymn,

> "God moves in a mysterious way
> His wonders to perform."

I was made to promise that when I preached in Rowland Hill's Chapel that hymn should be sung. Think of that as a promise from a child! Would it ever be other than an idle dream? Years flew by. After I had begun for some little time to preach in London, Dr. Alexander Fletcher had to give the annual sermon to children in Surrey Chapel, but as he was taken ill, I was asked in a hurry to preach to the children. "Yes," I said, "I will, if the children will sing, 'God moves in a mysterious way.' I have made a promise long ago that so that should be sung." And so it was: I preached in Rowland Hill's Chapel, and the hymn was sung. My emotions on that occasion I cannot describe. Still that was not the chapel which Mr. Knill intended. All unsought by me, the minister at Wotton-under-Edge, which was Mr. Hill's summer residence, invited me to preach

there. I went on the condition that the congregation should sing, "God moves in a mysterious way"— which was also done. After that I went to preach for Mr. Richard Knill himself, who was then at Chester. What a meeting we had! Mark this! he was preaching in a theatre! His preaching in a theatre took away from me all fear about preaching in secular buildings, and set me free for the campaigns in Exeter Hall and the Surrey Music Hall. How much this had to do with other theatre services you know.

> "God moves in a mysterious way
> His wonders to perform."

After more than forty years of the Lord's loving-kindness, I sat again in that arbor!

PROVIDENCE

A Providence.— I shall always regard the fact of my being here to-day as a remarkable instance of providence. I should not have occupied this hall probably, and been blessed of God in preaching to multitudes if it had not been for what I considered an untoward accident. I should have been at this time studying in college, instead of preaching here, but for a singular circumstance which happened. I had agreed to go to college: the tutor had come to see me, and I went to see him at the house of a mutual friend; I was shown by the servant into one drawing-room in the house, he was shown into another. He sat and waited for me for two hours; I sat and waited for him for two hours. He could wait no longer, and went away thinking I had not treated him well; I went away and thought that he had not treated me well. As I went away this text came into my mind, "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not." So I wrote to say that I must positively decline,

I was happy enough amongst my own country people, and got on very well in preaching, and I did not care to go to college. I have now had four years of labor. But, speaking after the manner of men, those who have been saved during that time would not have been saved, by my instrumentality at any rate, if it had not been for the remarkable providence turning the whole tenor of my thoughts, and putting things into a new track. You have often had strange accidents like that. When you have resolved to do a thing, you could not do it any how; it was quite impossible. God turned you another way, and proved that providence is indeed the master of all human events.

Look at Both Sides.— Mrs. Hannah More, I think it is, says, she went into a place where they were manufacturing a carpet. She said: "There is no beauty there." The man said: "It is one of the most beautiful carpets you ever saw." "Why, here is a piece hanging out, and is all in disorder." "Do you know why, ma'am? You look at the wrong side." So it is very often with us. You and I think Providence is very bad, because we are looking at the wrong side. We do look at the wrong side while we are here, but when we get to heaven we shall see the right side of God's dealings; and when we do we shall say: "Lord, how wonderful are thy works: in wisdom thou hast made them all: glorious are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well."

Special Providences.— I remember preaching at Halifax, in a huge timber building which was erected for the purpose. During the previous day the snow fell heavily, and it lay deep upon the ground. Nevertheless, the people came in their thousands, and thronged the enormous edifice; and gratefully do I remember how they went away to their homes in safety. They had no sooner cleared the building to the last man, than it fell in one

gigantic ruin. Why had it not fallen when the crowds were there? In my joy that no one was harmed I thought that God was there, and I praised his holy name. Was that a piece of superstition?

Take another instance. I was one day in great perplexity upon a certain matter of great importance to the cause of God. I laid it before God in prayer, but still I did not see my way: I could get no direction or guidance. Having to preach in North London, a friend kindly drove me to the spot, and afterwards I asked him to take me to the house of one of our people whom I wished to see. I scarcely noticed my way, till at last I found myself in a street unknown to me. I then said, "You are surely going wrong." "No," he said, "I am right enough." He was making for the private house of the person I had named, but I knew that he would at that time be at his office in the city, and I had intended to go there after him. We were on the wrong track, and so the horse's head was turned down at a side-street unknown to me, and as we passed along it, I saw the only man in all the world who could assist me out of my difficulty. How he came to be there I could not tell; how I came to be there I have already told you. Strangely had the Lord guided me, and the information guided the affair to a happy issue. God was near me.

Providence as a Detective.— Do you not know that Providence is a wonderful detective? There are hounds upon the track of every thief, and murderer, and liar — in fact, upon every sinner of every kind. Each sin leaves a trail. The dogs of judgment will be sure to scent it out, and find their prey. There is no disentangling yourselves from the meshes of guilt; no possibility of evading the penalty of transgression. Very wonderful have been the ways in which persons who have committed crimes have been brought to judgment. A trifle becomes a tell-

tale. The method of deceit gives a clue to the manner of discovery. Wretched the men who bury their secrets in their own bosom. Their conscience plays traitor to them. They have often been forced to betray themselves. We have read of men talking in their sleep to their fellows, and babbling out in thir dreams the crime they had committed years before. God would have the secret disclosed. No eye had seen, neither could any other tongue have told, but the man turned king's evidence against himself; he has thus brought himself to judgment. It has often happened, in some form or other, that conscience has thus been witness against men.

PUNISHMENT

The Reckoning.— You desire to take death into your reckoning that it may not surprise you unawares. He who should go upon a long journey, and provide for every difficulty on the road but one, would probably find the journey a failure. If, with a rolling chariot for the solid ways, he had forgotten to find the means of crossing the last river which would divide him from the country which he sought, he would be disappointed after all his pains. If you have provided for life, but have not also prepared for death, what better will you be, my hearer, than such a foolish traveller? We have heard of one, who, going into a tavern, ordered according to his wildest wishes, and feasted sumptuously on the best the house afforded, hour after hour; but when the host came with the bill, he told him that he had no money, and had quite forgotten the reckoning, thinking it quite enough to attend to the eating and drinking while these were the order of the day, without perplexing himself about the unknown future. Alas! my hearer, are *you* living in this inn of life, forgetting the reckoning? Do you go from cup to cup, from merriment to merriment,

feasting as tho there were no day of account appointed for you? If so, are you fool or knave, or both? For a man who would enjoy life, and yet shirk the account of his responsibilities with which the scene must close, is either foolish, or knavish, or both. Surely, since we must die, since "there is no discharge in this war," since every man must be a conscript to the army of death, since, whether it be to-morrow or the next day, or in a few years' time, every one of us must pass through the iron gate, it behoves us, knowing the fact, to take it into our account, to be diligent in forestalling its demands, and providing for its emergencies.

The Fate of the Self-Righteous.— I have heard of an army, who, being defeated in battle, endeavored to make good a retreat. With all their might the soldiers fled to a certain river, where they expected to find a bridge across which they could retreat and be in safety. But when they came to the stream, there was heard a shriek of terror —"The bridge is broken, the bridge is broken!" All in vain was that cry; for the multitude hurrying on behind, pressed upon those that were before and forced them into the river, until the stream was glutted with the bodies of drowned men. Such must be the fate of the self-righteous.

A Lost Soul.— In the life of Benjamin Keach — and he also was one of my predecessors — I find the case of a man who had been a professor of religion, but had departed from the profession, and had gone into awful sin. When he came to die, Keach, with many other friends went to see him, but they could never stay with him above five minutes at a time; for he said, "Get ye gone; it is of no use your coming to me; I have sinned away the Holy Ghost; I am like Esau, I have sold my birthright, and tho I seek it carefully with tears, I can never find it again." And then he would repeat dreadful

words, like these: "My mouth is filled with gravel-stones, and I drink wormwood day and night. Tell me not, tell me not of Christ! I know he is a Savior, but I hate him, and he hates me. I know I must die; I know I must perish!" And then followed doleful cries, and hideous noises, such as none could bear. They returned again in his placid moments, only to stir him once more, and make him cry out in his despair, "I am lost! I am lost! It is of no use for you to take the trouble to tell me anything about it!"

The Trifler's Doom.— Here is a man, who, as a young man, heard the gospel and grew up under the influence of it. He is an intelligent man, a Bible reader, and somewhat of a theologian. He attended a Bible class, was an apt pupil, and could explain much of Scripture, but *he took to lightness and frothiness.* He made an amusement of religion and a sport of serious things. Sermons he frequented that he might talk of them and say that he had heard the preacher. After the sermon, when others were impressed, he was merry. He had discovered some mistake in the preacher, in his pronunciation, in the grammatical construction of a sentence, or in a misquotation from a poet, and this he mentioned with gusto, passing by all the good that was spoken. That was only his way: he did not mean any hurt by it; at least, he would have said so had any one seriously reproved him.

He came under the bond of this religious trifling, but it was a cord of vanity small as a packthread. Years ago he began to be bound to his sin by this kind of trifling, and at the present moment I am not sure that he ever cares to go and hear the gospel or to read the word of God, for he has grown to despise that which he sported with. The wanton witling has degenerated into a malicious scoffer: his cord has become a cart-rope.

Doom of the Unstable.— I remember one that fell into a gross sin, of whom a brother unwisely said, "if that man is not a Christian, I am not." His prayers had certainly been sweet. Many a time they have melted me down before the throne of grace, and yet the life of God could not have been in his soul, for he lived and died in flagrant vice, and was impenitent to the last. Such cases I can only attribute to a sort of levity, which can be charmed with a sermon or a play; take a pew at the chapel or a box at the opera with equal nonchalance; and eagerly follow the excitement of the hour, "everything by turns and nothing long." "Unstable as water, they shall not excel."

The Mocker's Doom.— Ah! it was not long ago that a man who had laughed and mocked at me full many a time, went down one Sabbath day to Brighton, to spend his day in the excursion — he came back that night to die! On Monday morning, when he was dying, who do you suppose he wanted? He wanted Mr. Spurgeon! the man he had laughed at always; he wanted him to come and tell him the way to heaven, and point him to the Savior. And altho I was glad enough to go, it was doleful work to talk to a man who had just been Sabbath-breaking, spending his time in the service of Satan, and had come home to die. And die he did, without a Bible in his house, without having one prayer offered for him except that prayer which I alone did offer at his bedside. Ah! it is strange how the sight of a death-bed may be blessed to the stimulating of our zeal. I stood some year or so ago, by the bedside of a poor boy, about sixteen years of age, who had been drinking himself to death, in a drinking bout, about a week before, and when I talked to him about sin and righteousness, and judgment to come, I knew he trembled, and I thought that he had laid hold on Jesus. When I came down

from those stairs, after praying for him many a time, and trying to point him to Jesus, and having but a faint hope of his ultimate salvation, I thought to myself, O God! I would that I might preach every hour, and every moment of the day, the unsearchable riches of Christ; for what an awful thing it is to die without a Savior.

REGENERATION

Need of a New Birth.— I was staying one day at an inn in one of the valleys of Northern Italy, where the floor was dreadfully dirty. I had it in my mind to advise the landlady to scrub it, but when I perceived it was made of mud, I reflected that the more she scrubbed the worse it would be. The man who knows his own heart soon perceives that his corrupt nature admits of no improvement; there must be a new nature implanted, or the man will be only "washed to deeper stains." "Ye must be born again." Ours is not a case for mending, but for making new. The meaning of the prayer in my text is, "Lord, do not chastise me, but turn me. Do *thou* do it thyself, and then it will be done. 'Turn me, and I shall be turned,' but if thou dost not do it I am past hope." O troubled soul, if the Lord shall put his hand to the work this morning, what a wonderful change will he work in thee; but only his own right hand can do it. Pray, then, this prayer: "Turn me, and I shall be turned."

"No outward forms can make *you* clean,
Your leprosy lies deep within."

REPENTANCE

Personal Repentance.— I had a letter a few days ago from a young man who heard that during this week I was going to a certain town. Said he, "Sir, when you come

do preach a sermon that will fit me; for do you know, sir, I have heard it said that we must all think ourselves to be the wickedest people in the world, or else we cannot be saved. I try to think so, but I cannot, because I have not been the wickedest. I want to think so, but I cannot. I want to be saved, but I do not know how to repent enough." Now, if I have the pleasure of seeing him I shall tell him, God does not require a man to think himself the wickedest in the world, because that would sometimes be to think a falsehood; there are some men who are not so wicked as others are. What God requires is this, that a man should say, "I know more of myself than I do of other people; I know little about them, and from what I see of myself, not of my actions, but of my heart, I do think that there can be few worse than I am. They may be more guilty openly, but then I have had more light, more privileges, more opportunities, more warnings, and therefore I am still guiltier." I do not want you to bring your brother with you and say, "I am more wicked than he is;" I want you to come yourself, and say, "Father, I have sinned!" you have nothing to do with your brother William, whether he has sinned more or less; your cry should be, "Father, I have sinned." You have nothing to do with your cousin Jane, whether or not she has rebelled more than you. Your business is to cry, "Lord have mercy upon me a sinner!"

False Repentance.— I have heard of a woman who affected to believe that she was a sinner, and her minister, convinced that she did not know what she meant, thus exposed her folly. He said to her, "Well, if you are a sinner, of course you have broken God's laws; let us read the ten commandments, and see which you have broken." So turning to the decalogue he began to read: "Thou shalt have none other God before me;" "Did

you ever break that?" "Oh, no, not that she knew of." He proceeded, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image," and so on; "Did you ever break that?" "Never, sir," said she. Then "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." "Oh, dear no; She had been very particular on that point; she did not know that she had ever offended in that respect in her life." "Remember the seventh day to keep it holy." "Oh," said she, "I never do any work on a Sunday; everybody knows how particular I am about that." "Honor thy father and thy mother." "Yes," she replied, "she had been quite perfect in this matter; you might ask her friends if she had not been." "Thou shalt not kill." "Kill anybody! She wondered how the minister could ask her that." Of course, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," must be passed without a question. "Thou shalt not bear false witness." Much of a gossip tho she was, she protested she never did backbite anybody in all her life. And as to the idea of coveting, well, she might sometimes have wished that she was a little better off, but she never wanted any of anybody else's goods, she only wanted a little more of her own. So it turned out as the minister expected, that she really was not a sinner at all in her own estimation. It is marvellous how people who indulge in general confessions of sin attempt to exculpate themselves of each and every particular offence. Whatever the indictment is, they plead "Not Guilty."

RESURRECTION

The Resurrection Glory.— Old Master Spenser, who was a rare hand at making metaphors, says, "The body here is like an old rusty piece of iron, but Death shall be the blacksmith; he shall take it and he shall make it hot in his fire, until it shall sparkle and send forth burning

heat and look bright and shining." And so surely is it. We are thrust into the earth as into the fire, and there shall we be made to sparkle and to shine and to be full of radiance; no more the rusty things that we once were, but fiery spirits, like the cherubim and the seraphim, we shall wear a power and a glory the like of which we have not even yet conceived.

God's Cup.— I see before me an old and battered cup, which many a black lip hath touched, out of which many a villain's throat has received moisture. It is marred and covered over with filth. Who could tell what metal it is? It is brought in and given to the silversmith; he no sooner receives it, than he begins to break it into pieces; he dashes it into shivers again and again; he pounds it until he has broken it, and then puts it into his fining pot and melts it. Now you begin to see it sparkle again, and by and by he beats it out and fashions it into a goodly chalice, out of which a king may drink. Is this the same? the very same thing. This glorious cup, is this the old battered silver we saw just now? Yes, it is the same, and we who are here below like vessels, alas! too unfit for the Master's use; vessels which have even given comfort to the evil ones, and helped to do the work of Satan, we shall be put into the furnace of the grave, and be there melted down and fused and fashioned into a glorious wine cup, that in all its significance, shall stand upon the banqueting table of the Son of God.

Resurrection of the Body.— The certainty of the resurrection raises us above the dread which would otherwise surround the dissolution of our body. A child sees a man throwing precious metal into a melting pot, and he is sad because fair silver is being destroyed; but he that knows the business of the refiner understands that no loss will come of the process; only the

dross of that silver will be taken away, and the pure molten mass poured out into a comely mold will yet adorn a royal table. Well, my brethren, are we assured that to lose this vile body is clear gain since it will be fashioned according to the glorious body of the Lord Jesus?

SALVATION

Free Salvation Suits All.— Some years ago I had a very high compliment paid me by a gentleman who intended an insult. He ridiculed my preaching, and remarked that it would be eminently suited to the lowest class of negroes. This I accepted as an honorable admission, for he who could reach and bless the black man will not preach in vain to white people. I have heard of a preacher of whom his detractors said that he might do very well to preach to old women. Ah, then, he will do for anybody. I suppose he would suit old women because they were on the borders of the grave, and that is where we all are, for we are all much nearer to the grave than we imagine. Free salvation suits the vilest of the vile, and it is equally suitable for the most moral.

The Day of Probation.— An old eastern conqueror when he came to a city used to light a brazier of coals, and, setting it high upon a pole, he would, with sound of trumpet, proclaim, that if they surrendered while the lamp held out and burned he would have mercy upon them, but that when the coals were out he would storm the city, pull it stone from stone, sow it with salt, and put men, and women and children to a bloody death. To-day the thunders of God bid you to take like warning. There is your light, the lamp, the brazier of hot coals, Year after year the fire is dying out, nevertheless there is coal left.

The Great Salvation.— The narrow-minded bigot limits salvation to his own contracted notions, and he still says, "There shall none be saved, except they walk arm-in-arm with me." Poor, little, miserable soul! he cuts his coat according to his own fashion, and declares, that if men do not all cut their coats in the same way they cannot be saved. But not so the Bible. The Bible preaches a great salvation.

Salvation Only Through Christ.— The sinner in his natural estate reminds me of a man who has a strong and well-nigh impenetrable castle into which he has fled. There is the outer moat; there is a second moat; there are the high walls; and then afterward there is the dungeon and keep, into which the sinner will retire. Now, the first moat that goes round the sinner's trusting place is his good works. "Ah!" he says, "I am as good as my neighbor; twenty shillings in the pound down, ready money, I have always paid; I am no sinner; 'I tithe mint and cummin;' a good respectable gentleman I am indeed." Well, when God comes to work with him, to save him, he sends his army across the first moat; and as they go through it, they cry, "Salvation is of the Lord;" and the moat is dried up, for if it be of the Lord, how can it be of good works? But when that is done, he has a second intrenchment — ceremonies. "Well," he says, "I will not trust in my good works, but I have been baptized, I have been confirmed; do not I take the sacrament? That shall be my trust." "Over the moat! Over the moat!" And the soldiers go over again, shouting, "Salvation is of the Lord." The second moat is dried up; it is all over with that. Now they come to the next strong wall; the sinner, looking over it, says, "I can repent, I can believe, whenever I like; I will save myself by repenting and believing." Up come the soldiers of God, his great army of conviction, and

they batter this wall to the ground, crying, "'Salvation is of the Lord.' Your faith and your repentance must all be given you, or else you will neither believe nor repent of sin." And now the castle is taken; the man's hopes are all cut off; he feels that it is not of self; the castle of self is overcome, and the great banner upon which is written "Salvation is of the Lord" is displayed upon the battlements. But is the battle over? O no; the sinner has retired to the keep, in the center of the castle; and now he changes his tactics. "I cannot save myself," says he, "therefore I will despair; there is no salvation for me." Now this second castle is as hard to take as the first, for the sinner sits down and says, "I can't be saved, I must perish." But God commands the soldiers to take this castle, too, shouting, "Salvation *is* of the Lord;" tho it is not of man, *it is of God;* "he is able to save, even to the uttermost," tho you can not save yourself. This sword, you see, cuts two ways; it cuts pride down, and then it cleaves the skull of despair. If any man say he can save himself, it halveth his pride at once; and if another man say he cannot be saved, it dasheth his despair to the earth, for it affirms that he can be saved, seeing, "Salvation *is* of the Lord." That is the effect this doctrine has upon the sinner: may it have that effect on you!

The Sinner's Savior.— Kneeling by the bed of an apparently dying saint, last night, I said, "Well, sister, he has been precious to you; you can rejoice in his covenant mercies, and his past loving-kindnesses." She put out her hand, and said, "Ah! sir, do not talk about them now; I want the sinner's Savior as much now as ever; it is not a saint's Savior I want; it is still a sinner's Savior that I am in need of, for I am a sinner still." I found that I could not comfort her with the past; so I

reminded her of the golden streets, of the gates of pearl, of the walls of jasper, of the harps of gold, of the songs of bliss; and then her eye glistened; she said, "Yes, I shall be there soon; I shall meet them by and by;" and then she seemed so glad!

Sinners Clothed With Christ.— I remember well, how once God preached to me by a similitude in the depth of winter. The earth had been black, and there was scarcely a green thing or a flower to be seen. As you looked across the field, there was nothing but blackness — bare hedges and leafless trees, and black, black earth, wherever you looked. On a sudden God spake, and unlocked the treasures of the snow, and white flakes descended until there was no blackness to be seen, and all was one sheet of dazzling whiteness. It was at that time that I was seeking the Savior, and it was then I found him; and I remember well that sermon which I saw before me; "Come now, and let us reason together; tho your sins be as scarlet they shall be as snow, tho they be red like crimson they shall be whiter than wool." Sinner! thy heart is like that black ground; thy soul is like that black tree and hedgerow, without leaf or blossom; God's grace is like the white snow — it shall fall upon thee till thy doubting heart shall glitter in whiteness of pardon, and thy poor black soul shall be covered with the spotless purity of the Son of God. He seems to say to you, "Sinner, you are black, but I am ready to forgive you; I will wrap my heart in the ermine of my Son's righteousness, and with my Son's own garments on, thou shalt be holy as the Holy One."

The Key to Salvation.— A minister was one day going to preach. He climbed a hill on his road. Beneath him lay the villages, sleeping in their beauty, with the corn fields motionless in the sunshine; but he did not look at them, for his attention was arrested by a woman standing

at her door, and who, upon seeing him, came up to him with the greatest anxiety, and said, "O, sir, have you any keys about you? I have broken the key of my drawers, and there are some things that I must get directly." Said he, "I have no keys." She was disappointed, expecting that every one would have keys. "But suppose," he said, "I had some keys, they might not fit your lock, and therefore you could not get the articles you want. But do not distress yourself, wait till some one else comes up. But," said he, wishing to improve the occasion, "have you never heard of the key of heaven?" "Ah! yes," she said, "I have lived long enough, and have gone to church long enough to know that if we work hard and get our bread by the sweat of our brow, and act well toward our neighbors, and behave, as the catechism says, lowly and reverently to all our betters, and if we do our duty in that station of life in which it has pleased God to place us, and say our prayers regularly, we shall be saved." "Ah!" said he, "my good woman, that is a broken key, for you have broken the commandments, you have not fulfilled all your duties. It is a good key, but you have broken it." "Pray, sir," said she, believing that he understood the matter, and looking frightened, "what have I left out?" "Why," said he, "the all-important thing, the blood of Jesus Christ. Don't you know it is said, the key of heaven is at his girdle; he openeth, and no man shutteth; he shutteth, and no man openeth?"

Bread Without Price.— I know a brother here who wanted to take a certain shop in a wide street, but his wiser friend said, "Do not take that shop for a baker's. It is not a good eating locality. You must open a shop in one of the streets where there are plenty of poor people, who will buy the bread every morning. Make it good and cheap, and it will not stop long on the shelves."

I noticed in the newspaper that a certain drink-shop was "in a good drinking locality." I am sorry that there are such localities. But, assuredly, a good eating locality must be the very place for vending bread. I think that this Tabernacle stands in a good eating locality. Many are here now who are hungry after Christ, and it is a blessed fact that they may have him, and feed upon him without stint. And what is the price? The price? The difficulty with all other traders is to get you up to their price; but my difficulty is to get you down to mine — for the bread of heaven is *without price.*

Folly of Rejecting Salvation.— A man may act the cripple till he grows hopelessly lame. Mind what you are at. You may lock a door, and open it again for many a year; but one of these days you may so hamper the lock that it will not open again. Oh, that you may at once believe in Jesus Christ unto eternal life!

Permanence of Grace.— It may seem somewhat strange to you, but that form of loving kindness which mainly drew me to the Lord was this — I saw a good deal of the instability of character in young men who begin life with bright prospects and fair promises, and I trembled for my own future. I read in the New Testament that he that believeth in Jesus hath everlasting life. I saw in the language of Christ himself these words —"I give unto my sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hands." Oh, how I longed to be one of these sheep, in the hands of Jesus! I had known schoolfellows who were held up as patterns to me, who acted very disappointingly after they left home; and I thought within myself: Oh, for a spiritual life insurance! Oh, for a way of putting my soul into secure keeping, so that I shall not become the prey of sin, but shall be kept by the grace of God even to the end! The belief that I should find this *perma-*

nence of grace in Christ Jesus drew me more than anything else to Jesus.

No Condemnation for the Saved.— When Giant Despair's head was cut off, Mr. Bunyan says that the pilgrims danced; and well they might. Mr. Despondency and Miss Much-afraid took a turn, and even Ready-to-Halt with his crutches must needs join in. I warrant you he footed it well. When he saw the monster's head upon the pole he could not help being merry. This text sticks the giant's head up on the pole for us. "There is therefore now no condemnation." Oh for the loud-sounding cymbals! Now for the maidens and their timbrels. Let us have holy merriment over this. Poor prodigal sinners have fled to Jesus and hidden in him, and there is now no condemnation to them. Poverty? Yes, but no condemnation. Depression of spirit? Yes, sometimes; but no condemnation. Infirmities and weaknesses, and things to grieve over? Yes, plenty of them, but no condemnation. "O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!"

Not by Works but Grace.— Remember how Mr. Bunyan says that, when he was a godless man, he could have kissed the earth on which the clergy walked, and he thought that every nail in the church door was sacred. Among dissenters, the man who is trying to save himself usually thinks that every practice of the little community with which he is united is infallibly correct. He has no real love to Christ, and has on trust in Christ's righteousness: but how he will work at his favorite self-salvation! And you will have to work at it, sirs, if you are going to heaven by your works! To work your fingers to the bones is nothing. You might as well try to climb to the stars on a treadmill as to get to heaven by your good works; and, certainly, you might more easily sail from Liverpool to America on a sere leaf than

ever get to heaven by works and doings of your own. There is more wanted than will ever come of yourself. You want a Savior. You must be born again from above. You want a salvation that shall be a gift of infinite charity, a benison of the boundless mercy of the eternal God; and nothing else will save you.

Saved by Submission.— You have heard the story of the English king who was wroth with the burgesses of Calais, and declared that he would hang six of them. They came to him with ropes about their necks, submitting to their doom. That is the way in which I came to Jesus. I accepted my punishment, pleaded guilty, and begged for pardon. Put your rope upon your neck; confess that you deserve to die, and come to Jesus. Put no honeyed words into your mouth; turn out that nonsense of self-righteousness from your heart, and cry, "Save, Lord, or I perish!" If thus you plead you shall never perish. You are the kind of man for whom Christ died — the sort of man whom he never did spurn, and never will spurn, while the world standeth.

Knocking for Mercy.— If I have to enter in by a door which is well secured, I shall need tools and science. I confess I do not understand the art; you must send for a gentleman who understands picklocks, "jemmies," and all sorts of burglarious instruments: but if I am only told to knock, fool as I am at opening doors, I know how to knock. Any uneducated man can knock if that is all which is required of him. Is there a person here who cannot put words together in prayer? Never mind, friend; knocking can be done by one who is no orator. Perhaps another cries, "I am no scholar." Never mind, a man can knock tho he may be no philosopher. A dumb man can knock. A blind man can knock. With a palsied hand a man may knock. He who knows nothing of his book can still lift a hammer and let it

fall. The way to open heaven's gate is wonderfully simplified to those who are lowly enough to follow the Holy Spirit's guidance, and ask, seek, and knock believingly.

Running Into God's Arms.— Some years ago I was walking in the garden one evening, and I saw a stray dog about whom I had received information that he was in the habit of visiting my grounds, and that he did not in the least assist the gardener, and therefore his attentions were not desired. As I walked along one Saturday evening meditating upon my sermon, I saw this dog busily doing mischief. I threw my stick at him, and told him to go home. But what do you think he did? Instead of grinding his teeth at me, or hurrying off with a howl, he looked at me very pleasantly, took up my stick in his mouth, and brought it to me and then, wagging his tail, he laid the stick at my feet. The tears were in my eyes: the dog had beaten me. I said, "Good dog! Good dog; you may come here when you like after that." Why had the dog conquered me? Because he had confidence in me, and would not believe that I could mean him any hurt. To turn to grander things: the Lord himself cannot resist humble confidence. Do you not see how a sinner brings, as it were, the rod of justice to the Lord, and cries, "If thou smite me, I deserve it, but I submit to thee." The great God cannot spurn a trustful heart. It is impossible. He were not God if he could cast the soul away that implicitly relies on him. This is the power of faith, then, and I marvel not that the Lord should have chosen it, for believing is a thing most pleasing to God. O that you would all trust him! God lifts his sword against you — run into his arms. He threatens you — grasp his promise. He pursues you — fly to his dear Son. Trust at the foot of the cross in his full atonement, and you must be saved.

Hungry for Salvation.— A wretched sinner jumps at mercy like a hungry fish leaping at the bait. When a soul is empty then it longs for the fulness of Christ, but not till then. Full souls quarrel over honeycombs, they are not sweet enough for them; but to the hungry man even every bitter thing is sweet. A man who is conscious of sin will not quibble about the way of grace, but if pardon is to be had he will have it at once: whoever may be silent, you will hear his voice crying aloud, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Only Candidates Elected.— Perhaps you have read the story of a governor of one of the American States who called at a hotel where there was a colored waiter, who was well known to hold Calvinistic opinions, and was, therefore, made the butt for many a jest. So the Governor said to him, "Sam, you do not really believe that doctrine of election, do you?" "'Deed I do, sah," said he. "Well, then," replied the Governor, "tell me whether I am elect or not." "Sah," said the negro, "I did not know you were a candidate, and I know nothing about a man's ever being elected if he has not put up for it."

Insecure Foundations.— Your good works are good enough in themselves — good enough in your generation — but they will never do for a foundation to rest upon. Do not run away and say something like the foolish man who went to a place where there was a house being built, and seeing the chimney pots standing there, he took them, and laid them in the trench to make the foundation. "What are you doing?" said one of the workman. "Why, laying the foundation?" "What, with the chimney-pots?" "I did not know that it was wrong," said he. "Well, take them away; they won't do for a foundation." "Oh!" said the other, "you are finding fault with them." "No; I am not finding fault

with them, but with the place where you put them; they are good enough on the top, but they will not do at the bottom." So with good works; they will do at the top, but they will not do at the bottom. As a foundation for the soul to rest upon nothing will suffice but the righteousness of Christ and his finished work. This is our hope of salvation. Our good works are good enough afterwards, when God the Holy Spirit by his grace works faith, and love, and all good things in us.

The Water of Life.— As I walked over a long sandy road one day last week, when the weather was sultry, and the heat, far beyond our common expereince in this country, was almost tropical, I saw a little stream of cool water, and being parched with thirst I stooped down and drank. Do you think I asked anybody's leave or inquired whether I might drink or not? I didn't know who it belonged to, and I didn't care. There it was, and I felt if it was there it was enough for me. Nobody was there to call out "Ho!" My inward craving called out "Ho!" I was thirsty, and water was there inviting to my taste. I noticed after I had drank that there were two poor tramps came along, and they went down and drank in like manner. I didn't find anybody marching them off to prison. There was the stream. The stream being there, and the thirsty men being there, the supply was suited to their need, and they promptly partook of it. How strange it is that when God has provided the gospel, and men want it, they should require somebody to call out to them, "Ho! ho! ho!" and then they will not come after all. Oh! if they were a little more thirsty, if they did but know their need more, if they were convinced more of their sin, then they would scarcely want an invitation, but the mere fact of a supply would be sufficient for them, and they would come and drink, and satisfy the burning thirst within.

Our Part in Salvation.— A poor simpleton once said, "'Twas God and I did the work." "Well, but Charlie, what part did you take in it?" "Sure, then," said he, "I did all I could to stop the Lord, and he beat me." I suppose, did we tell the simple truth we should say much the same. In the matter of our salvation we do all we can to oppose it — our old nature does — and he overcomes our evil propensities. From first to last Jesus Christ has to be the Author and the Finisher of our salvation, or it never would have been begun and it never would have been completed.

Universal Amnesty.— When Charles II. came back to England there was an amnesty, except for certain persons, and these were mentioned by name — Hugh Peters and others were proscribed; but there is no exception here. I find not any traitors singled out and denounced by name. I have to proclaim an indemnity of such universal import that it is indiscriminate, "Whosoever believeth on him shall never perish, but shall have everlasting life."

Safe in the Ark.— We never read that Noah called up Shem, Ham, and Japheth to work at the pumps, nor yet that they had any, for there was not a bit of leakage about her. No doubt there were storms during that year; but we do not hear that the ship was ever in danger of being wrecked. The rocks, it is true, were too low down to touch her bottom; for fifteen cubits upwards did the waters prevail, and the mountains were covered. Rising twenty-seven feet above the loftiest mountains, she had no quicksands to fear; they were too deep below her keel. But of course she was exposed to the winds; sometimes the hurricane might have rattled against her, and driven her along. Doubtless, at another time, the hail beat on her top, and the lightnings scarred the brow of night; but the ark sailed on, not one was cast out

from her, nor were her sailors wearied with constant pumping to keep out the water, or frequent repairs to keep her secure. Tho the world was inundated and ruined, that one ark sailed triumphantly above the waters. The ark was safe, and all who were in her were safe, too.

SATAN

Resist the Devil.— I remember hearing a good brother speak about courage against the devil, and in reference to spiritual power he said that he believed that a man of God, when he had faith, could kick his way through a street full of devils from one end to the other. I admired his simile. It was worthy of Martin Luther, for it was the kind of thing that Martin Luther would have said. Oh, if the air were as full of devils as it is of fogs, a man that has God within him might laugh them all to scorn. Who can hurt the man whom God protects?

Defeating the Devil.— I met the other day with a piece of one of Christmas Evans's sermons — it struck me forcibly, and I determined to repeat it —" The enemy is ever after our souls; let us keep our hearts with all diligence; let us store our hearts with texts of Scripture, in the things given, that we may be kept out of the way." Then he gives this parable —" Once upon a time the devil determined to do a mighty business. Seeking whom he may devour, he went through the land, determined to devour some souls. He came upon a ploughboy standing there, and he said to himself, 'I will tempt the boy to rob his master; then he will get into prison; t'will bring him into bad company, so that he will get worse, and be transported, and ultimately get to the gallows, and I shall have his soul forever.' The devil strode

across the moor, and, as he approached the ploughboy, he heard him singing —

'My God, the spring of all my joys,
The life of my delights,
The glory of my brightest days,
And comfort of my nights.'

'Ah!' said the devil, 'he won't answer my purpose,' and off he went. There was no room for him there; it was a dry place. So, flying over hill and dale, he came to a quiet nook in a valley between two high mountains, where there was a sweet little cottage overgrown with ivy, with its porch covered with eglantine. There sat beneath the porch a maiden knitting. 'I will entice her,' said he, 'away to the big town, and lead her into ways of folly, and sin, and shame. She shall perish in an infirmary, and her soul will be mine for ever.' He stooped to whisper in her ear some temptation, but he heard her singing —

'Jesus, I love thy charming name,
'Tis music to mine ear;
Fain would I sound it out so loud
That earth and heaven should hear.'

'That won't answer,' said he; and he went his way, saying, 'I should have done better to have been with old Williams all day; I could have tormented the old fellow: I will be off to him now.' So he flew away, and at nightfall alighted in a village. All the lamps were out save one, in a cottage, where he saw the light glimmering in an upper room. It seemed to be a rushlight dying in the socket. 'Here,' said he, 'old Williams lives. He has served God these fifty years, and if I could get him now, what a trophy he would be! it would pay me for all my disappointments if I could get old Williams after all his professions. He stepped up stairs, and

there Williams lay dying. 'Now,' said he, 'I will make him doubt, and die in despair, and perish!' The crisis was just come; his friends were gathering round his bed, expecting his departure. Satan stepped lightly across the room, to get at the dying man's ear; and as he came close to him, Williams stretched out his hand, and said, 'Yea, tho I pass through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me!' 'Thou hast prepared a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.' Satan shrank back abashed, and went away howling. He did no more that day, and never had he done such a sorry day's work before. He was wholly beaten, entirely overcome, because the minds of the people whom he wished to attack had been pre-occupied, and they were feeding on God's word."

Satan and Our Weak Spot.— We have all our tender spots. When Thetis dipped Achilles in the Styx, you remember she held him by the heel; he was made invulnerable wherever the water touched him, but his heel not being covered with the water, was vulnerable, and there Paris shot his arrow, and he died. It is even so with us. We may think that we are covered with virtue till we are totally invulnerable, but we have a heel somewhere; there is a place where the arrow of the devil can make way: hence the absolute necessity of taking to ourselves "the *whole* armor of God," so that there may not be a solitary joint in the harness that shall be unprotected against the arrows of the devil. Satan is very crafty; he knows the ins and outs of manhood. There is many an old castle that has stood against every attack, but at last some traitor from within has gone without, and said, "I know an old deserted passage, a subterranean back way, that has not been used for many a day. In such and such a field you will see an opening;

clear away a heap of stones there, and I will lead you down the passage: you will then come to an old door of which I have the key, and I can let you in; and so by a back way I can lead you into the very heart of the citadel, which you may then easily capture." It is so with Satan. Man knoweth not himself so well as Satan knows him. There are back ways and subterranean passages into man's heart which the devil doth well understand; and he who thinketh that he is safe, let him take heed lest he fall.

The Devil's Advocate.— They used to have in Rome when they were canonizing saints an *Advocatus Diaboli,* or advocate of the devil, who was wont to plead against the person being canonized, and offer all the objections he could. It seems strange that so many people should turn *Advocati Diaboli* against themselves. I can tell you how they argue, for I have talked to them by the hour, and this has been the fashion of their counter-pleading, "But, sir, I don't feel any need of it." We reply, "If you cannot go to Christ *with* a broken heart, go to Christ *for* a broken heart." "Oh, but, sir, I don't feel that I am fit to go." "Your unfitness is the only evidence he wants." "But I don't think I have repented enough." "Granted; and you never will repent enough, could your tears forever flow. You cannot be saved by the merit of your repentance.

SERVICE

The Blessedness of Service.— A little stream flowed through a manufacturing town; an unhappy little stream it was, for it was forced to turn huge wheels and heavy machinery, and it wound its miserable way through factories where it was dyed black and blue, until it became a foul and filthy ditch, and loathed itself. It felt the tyranny which polluted its very existence. Now, there

came a deliverer who looked upon the streamlet and said, "I will set thee free and give thee rest." So he stopped up the water-course, and said, "Abide in thy place, thou shalt no more flow where thou art enslaved and defiled." In a very few days the brooklet found that it had but exchanged one evil for another. Its waters were stagnating, they were gathering into a great pool, and desiring to find a channel. It was in its very nature to flow on, and it foamed and swelled, and pressed against the dam which stayed it. Every hour it grew more inwardly restless, it threatened to break the barrier, and it made all who saw its angry looks tremble for the mischief it would do ere long. It never found rest until it was permitted to pursue an active course along a channel which had been prepared for it among the meadows and the corn fields. Then, when it watered the plains and made glad the villages, it was a happy streamlet, perfectly at rest. So our souls are made for activity, and when we are set free from the activities of our self-righteousness and the slavery of our sin we must do something, and we shall never rest until we find that something to do.

The Joy of Service.— Last Monday I was cheered beyond all I can tell you by a letter from a brother who had been restored to life, light, and liberty by the discourse of last Sabbath morning. I know no greater joy than to be useful to your souls. For this reason, I have tried to preach this morning, tho I am quite unfit for it physically. Oh, I do pray I may hear more news from saved ones! Oh, that some spirit that has wandered out into the dark moorland may spy the candle in my window, and find its way home! If you have found my Lord, I charge you never let him go, but cleave to him till the day shall break, and the shadows themselves shall flee away.

Persevering Service.— You know the story of the man who comes riding up to the captain, and says, "Sir, we have taken a gun from the enemy." "Go and take another," said the matter-of-fact officer. That is the best advice which I can render to a friend who is elated with his own success. So much remains to be accomplished that we have no time to consider what has been done. If we have done holy service, let us do it a second time, and do it a third time, and continue to do it, ever praying the Lord to accept our persevering service. In any case let our consecrated life be for our Lord's eye alone, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Anything like sounding a trumpet before us is hateful to the lowly Lord; secrecy has a charm for Jesus, and the more carefully we preserve it the better.

The Service of Love.— It is said that the soldiers of Persia were driven into battle, and that the sound of the whips of the generals could be heard even while the battle was raging, lashing on the unwilling ranks to fulfil their part in the fray. Not so went the Greeks to battle. They rushed like lions amidst a flock of sheep to tear their prey. They fought for their country, for their temples, for their lives, for all that they held dear, and right cheerfully from such an impulse within did they engage in the war. The difference between the Greeks and the Persians is just the difference I want to describe among the professed followers of our Lord. The genuine Christian serves God because he loves him; not that he fears hell, for he knows that he has been delivered from condemnation, being washed in Jesus' blood; not that he expects to earn heaven, he scorns the idea. Heaven is not to be merited by our poor paltry works. And besides, heaven is his inheritance, since Christ has given it to him, having made his title sure. But he serves God because he loves him. He is drawn by a

sense of the love of God towards him to love God in return.

SIN

Time Cannot Cover Sin.— When the trumpet of resurrection sounds, there will be a resurrection of characters, as well as of men. The man who has been foully slandered will rejoice in the light that reflects his purity. But the man whose latent vices have been skilfully veneered will be brought to the light, too. His acts and motives will be alike exposed. As he himself looks and sees the resuscitation of his crimes, with what horror will he face that day of judgment! "Ah! ah!" says he; "Where am I? I had forgotten these. These are the sins of my childhood, the sins of my youth, the sins of my manhood, and the sins of my old age. I thought they were dead and buried, but they start from their tombs. My memory has been quickened. How my brain reels as I think of them all! But there they are, and, like so many wolves around me, they seem all thirsting for my destruction." Beware, oh men! Ye have buried your sins, but they will rise up from their graves and accuse you before God. Time cannot cover them.

The Sting of Death.— Imagine a conqueror's deathbed. He has been a man of blood from his youth up. Bred in the camp, his lips were early set to the bugle, and his hand, even in infancy, struck the drum. He had a martial spirit; he delighted in the fame and applause of men; he loved the dust of battle and the garment rolled in blood. He has lived a life of what men call glory. He has stormed cities, conquered countries, ravaged continents, overrun the world. See his banners hanging in the hall, and the marks of glory on his escutcheon. He is one of earth's proudest warriors.

But now he comes to die, and when he lies down to expire, what shall invest his death with horror? It shall be his sin. Methinks I see the monarch dying; he lies in state; around him are his nobles and his councillors; but there is somewhat else there. Hard by his side there stands a spirit from Hades; it is a soul of a departed woman. She looks on him and says, "Monster! my husband was slain in battle through thy ambition: I was made a widow, and my helpless orphans and myself were starved." And she passes by. Her husband comes, and opening wide his bloody wounds, he cries, "Once I called thee monarch; but, by thy vile covetousness thou didst provoke an unjust war. See here these wounds — I gained them in the siege. For thy sake I mounted first the scaling ladder; this foot stood upon the top of the wall, and I waved my sword in triumph, but in hell I lifted up my eyes in torment. Base wretch, thine ambition hurried me thither!" Turning his horrid eyes upon him, he passes by. Then up comes another, and another, and another yet: waking from their tombs, they stalk around his bed and haunt him; the dreary procession still marches on, looking at the dying tyrant. He shuts his eyes, but he feels the cold and bony hand upon his forehead; he quivers, for the sting of death is in his heart. "O Death!" says he; "to leave this large estate, this mighty realm, this pomp and power — this were somewhat; but to meet those men, those women, and those orphan children, face to face; to hear them saying; 'Art thou become like one of us?' while kings whom I have dethroned, and monarchs whom I have cast down shall rattle their chains in my ears, and say, 'Thou wast our destroyer, but how art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou brought down as in a moment from thy glory and thy pride!'" There, you see, the sting

of death would be the man's sin. It would not sting him that he had to die, but that he had sinned, that he had been a bloody man, that his hands were red with wholesale murder — this would plague him indeed, for "the sting of death is sin."

Sin's Cruel Work.— When we discover that our iniquities put our dearest and best friend to death, we vow revenge against our iniquities and henceforth hate them with a perfect hatred. Let me illustrate this very simply. Here is a knife, with a richly-carved ivory handle, a knife of excellent workmanship. Yonder woman, we will suppose, has had a dear child murdered by a cruel enemy. This knife is hers, she is pleased with it, and prizes it much. How can I make her throw that knife away? I can do it easily, for that is the knife with which her child was killed. Look at it; there is blood still upon the handle. She drops it as tho it were a scorpion; she cannot bear it. "Put it away," saith she, "it killed my child! Oh, hateful thing!" Now, sin is such a thing: we play with it till we are told it was sin that killed the Lord Jesus, who died out of love to us — pure, disinterested love. Then we say, "Hateful thing, get thee gone! How can I endure thee?" Remember how Mark Antony stirred up the Romans to a fury against Cæsar's murderers. Holding up the mantle of dead Cæsar, he pointed to the rents and gashes in the garment —

> "In this place ran Cassius' dagger through;
> Through this the well-beloved Brutus stabbed."

And thus he inflamed the multitude to such a pitch of fury that they snatched up the seats around them, and away they went to the houses of the conspirators to set them on a blaze. Ah! if my lips could speak as my heart bids them, I would cry, See there the wounds of

the Son of God; behold the crimson stains which mark his blessed body: mark the thorn-crown; gaze upon the pierced hands; weep over the nailed feet; see the deep gash which the lance made in his side! Sin did this cruel work, this bloody deed! Down with our sins; drag them to the cross; slay them at Calvary; let not one of them escape, for they are the murderers of Christ!

Afraid of Sin.— Ulysses Androvaldus tells us that a dove is so afraid of a hawk, that she will be frightened at the sight of one of its feathers. Whether it be so or not, I cannot tell; but this I know, that when a man has had a thorough shaking over the jaws of hell, he will be so afraid of sin, that even one of the feathers of it, any one sin, will alarm and send a thrill of fear through his soul. This is a part of the way by which the Lord turns us when we are turned indeed.

A True Sight of Sin.— We have all seen bears in a pit, and lions in stone, and have seen them without alarm; but I can readily imagine that if a lion were suddenly to leap from my platform into the midst of this throng, you would regard it with a very different eye. A wild beast let loose among you would be a very different thing from what it is in a picture or a statue. Now, sin, as the preacher talks of it, is to most of you like a painted lion; but when a man feels it in his own soul as a living evil full of mischief, it is a very different thing. We are like the man in the fable, who warmed a frozen viper in his bosom; but when it came to life he knew its poisonous nature, for he felt the venom in his veins. Men, before God quickens them, nurse the viper of sin in their bosom, and say, "Look at its azure scales; how fair it is to look upon! Do you suppose so harmless a creature could ever do me injury?" They put it in their bosoms with much fondness; but when it bites them, and the hot poison runs through their veins, and

conscience is thoroughly awakened, then they loathe it and cast it from them, or rather would do so if they could; but as Laocoon, in the old story, tried in vain to tear the serpent's coils from his limbs, so is it with them until grace comes to their aid. At any rate, a true sight of sin soon turns a man most thoroughly from his former love of it.

Sin Must be Abandoned.— I know that there are some here, and there always have been some few attending my ministry, who have a personal affection for me, and who listen to the Word with very great attention, and who, moreover, are very greatly moved by it, but who have some besetting sin which they either cannot or will not give up. They do renounce it for a time; but either bad associates, or else the strength of their passions, take them away again. Oh, sirs! I would ye would take warning. There was one of whom we had some sort of hope, who listened to our ministry. There came a turning-point with him. It was this: either that he must give up sin, or else give up coming to the Tabernacle. And what, oh! what became of him? I could indicate the place where he sat. *He died of delirium tremens!* And I do not wonder.

Danger of Little Sins.— St. Augustine gives a picture of how far men will go when they once begin to sin. There was a man who in argument declared that the devil made flies; "Well," said the man with whom he was arguing, "if the devil made flies, then it is but little more to say the devil made worms!" "Well," said the other, "I believe it." "Well," said the man, "if the devil made worms, how do you know but what he made small birds?" "Well," said the other, "it is likely he did!" "Well," resumed the man with whom he was arguing, "but if he made small birds, why may he not have made big ones? And if he made big birds, why

may he not have made man? And if he made man, why may he have not made the world?" "You see," says St. Augustine, "by one admission, by once permitting the devil to be thought the creator of a fly, the man came to believe that the devil was the Creator." Just get one small error into your minds, get one small evil into your thoughts, commit one small act of sin in your life, permit these things to be dandled, and fondled, favored, petted, and treated with respect, and you cannot tell whereunto they may grow. They are small in their infancy; they will be giants when they come to their full growth. Thou little knowest how near thy soul may be to destruction, when thou wantonly indulgest in the smallest act of sin!

Secret Love for Sin.— Rowland Hills tells a curious tale of one of his hearers who sometimes visited the theater. He was a member of the church. So going to see him, he said, I understand Mr. So and so, you are very fond of frequenting the theater. No, sir, he said, that's false. I go now and then just for a great treat, still I don't go because I like it; it is not a habit of mine. Well, said Rowland Hill, suppose some one should say to me, Mr. Hill, I understand you eat carrion, and I should say, No, no, I don't eat carrion. It is true, I now and then have a piece of carrion for a great treat. Why, he would say, you have convicted yourself, it shows that you like it better than most people, because you save it up for a special treat. Other men only take it as common daily food, but you keep it by way of a treat. It shows the deceitfulness of your heart, and manifests that in spite of what you may think you still love the ways and wages of sin.

The Thistle-Seed.— Years ago there was not a single thistle in the whole of Australia. Some Scotchman who very much admired thistles — rather more than I do —

thought it was a pity that a great island like Australia should be without that marvellous and glorious symbol of his great nation. He, therefore, collected a packet of thistle-seeds, and sent it over to one of his friends in Australia. Well, when it was landed, the officers might have said, "Oh, let it in; 'is it not a little one?' Here is but a handful of thistle-down, oh, let it come in; it will be but sown in a garden — the Scotch will grow it in their gardens; they think it a fine flower, no doubt,— let them have it, it is but meant for their amusement." Ah, yes, it was but a little one; but now whole districts of country are covered with it, and it has become the farmer's pest and plague. It was a little one; but, all the worse for that, it multiplied and grew. If it had been a great evil, all men would have set to work to crush it. This little evil is not to be eradicated, and of that country it may be said till doomsday,—"Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth." Happy would it have been if the ship that brought that seed had been wrecked. No boon is it to those of our countrymen there on the other side of the earth, but a vast curse. Take heed of the thistle-seed; little sins are like it. Take care they are not admitted into your heart. Endeavor to shun them as soon as Satan presents them. Go, seek by the grace of God and his Holy Spirit to keep them away; for if not, these little sins will multiply so fast, that, altho you remain wholly unconscious of it, they will be your ruin and destruction.

Hidden Sin.— Some people I know of are like inns, which have an angel hanging outside for a sign, but they have a devil within for a landlord. There are many men of that kind; they take good care to have an excellent sign hanging out; they must be known by all men to be strictly religious; but within, which is the all-important matter, they are full of wickedness.

Sin Will Not Stay Hidden.— There is a singular poem by Hood, called "The Dream of Eugene Aram"— a most remarkable piece it is indeed, illustrating the point on which I am now dwelling. Aram has murdered a man and cast his body into the river —"a sluggish water, black as ink, the depth was so extreme." The next morning he visited the scene of his guilt,

> "And sought the black accursed pool,
> With a wild misgiving eye;
> And he saw the dead in the river bed,
> For the faithless stream was dry."

Next he covered the corpse with heaps of leaves, but a mighty wind swept through the wood and left the secret bare before the sun.

> "Then down I cast me on my face,
> And first began to weep,
> For I knew my secret then was one
> That earth refused to keep,
> On land or sea, though it should be
> Ten thousand fathoms deep."

In plaintive notes he prophesies his own discovery. He buried his victim in a cave, and trod him down with stones, but when years had run their weary round the foul deed was discovered and the murderer put to death.

Sin Will Out.— Sin cannot be held in with bit and bridle. "But I am going to have a little drink now and then. I am only going to be intoxicated once a week or so. Nobody will see it; I shall be in bed directly." You will be drunk in the streets soon. "I am only just going to read one lascivious book; I will put it under the sofa-cover when anyone comes in." You will keep it in your library yet, sir. "I am only going into that company now and then." You will go there every day, such is the bewitching character of it; you cannot help it. You

may as well ask the lion to let you put your head into his mouth. You cannot regulate his jaws, neither can you regulate sin. Once go into it, you cannot tell when you will be destroyed. You may be such a fortunate individual, that, like Van Amburgh, you may put your head in and out a great many times; rest assured that one of these days it will be a costly venture. Again, you may labor to conceal your vicious habit, but it will come out, you cannot help it. You keep your little pet sin at home; but mark this, when the door is ajar the dog will be out in the street.

Presumptuous Sins.— You remind me, some of you, of that story of Dionysius the tyrant, who, wishing to punish one who had displeased him, invited him to a noble feast. Rich were the viands that were spread upon the table, and rare the wines of which he was invited to drink. A chair was placed at the head of the table, and the guest was seated within it. Horror of horrors! The feast might be rich, but the guest was miserable, dreadful beyond thought. However splendid might be the array of the servants, and however rich the dainties, yet he who had been invited sat there in agony. For what reason? Because over his head, immediately over it, there hung a sword, a furbished sword, suspended by a single hair. He had to sit all the time with this sword above him, with nothing but a hair between him and death. You may conceive the poor man's misery. He could not escape; he must sit where he was. How could he feast? How could he rejoice! But O, my unconverted hearer, thou art there this morning, man, with all thy riches and thy wealth before thee, with the comforts of a home and the joys of a household; thou art there this day, in a place from which thou canst not escape; the sword of death above thee, prepared to descend; and woe unto thee, when it shall cleave thy soul

from thy body. Canst thou yet make mirth, and yet procrastinate? If thou canst, then verily thy sin is presumptuous in a high degree. "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins."

The Bravado of Sin.— A mouse was caught in a trap, the other day, by its tail, and the poor creature went on eating the cheese. Many men are doing the same; they know they are guilty, and they dread their punishment, but they go on nibbling at their beloved sins. They remind me of the soldier in the old classic story. The army marched through a certain country, and the commander-in-chief ordered that there should be no plundering; not a man must touch a bunch of grapes in going through the vineyards, or he should die for his disobedience. One soldier, tempted by a bunch of grapes, must needs pluck it, and begin to eat it. He was brought before the captain, who declared that the law must be carried out and the thief must die. He was taken out to die; and tho he knew his head would be cut off, he went on eating the grapes as he walked along. A comrade wondered that he should do this; but the condemned man answered that no one ought to grudge him his grapes, for they cost him dear enough.

Such are the bravados of sinners. The breasts of wicked men are steeled rather than softened by a sense of condemnation; but once let the Holy Spirit remove the burden of their guilt, and they will be dissolved by love. Free pardon is a great conqueror. The love of Jesus soon makes men turn from sin with burning hatred. Forgiving love is a main instrument in transforming men from rebels into friends.

Cutting Sin's Traces.— I remember reading a famous writer's description of a wretched cab-horse which was old and worn out and yet kept on its regular round of toil. They never took him out of harness for fear they

should never be able to get his poor old carcass into it again. He had been in the shafts for so many years that they feared if they took him out of them he would fall to pieces, and so they let him keep where he was accustomed to be. Some men are just like that. They have been in the shafts of sin so many years that they fancy that if they were once to alter they would drop to pieces. But it is not so, old friend. We are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation. The Lord will make a new creature of you. When he cuts the traces and brings you out from between those shafts which have so long held you, you will not know yourself. When old things have passed away you will be a wonder unto many.

The Wolves of Sin.— In the heyday of youth man finds beaded bubbles about the brim of his cup of sin, the wine moveth itself aright, it giveth its color in the cup, but as he grows older and drinks deeper he comes nearer to the dregs, and those dregs are as gall and wormwood. An old man with his bones filled with the sin of his youth is a dreadful sight to look upon; he is a curse to others, and a burden to himself. A man who has fifty years of sin behind him is like a traveler pursued by fifty howling wolves. Do you hear their deep bay as they pursue the wretch? Do you see their eyes glaring in the dark, and flaming like coals of fire? Such a man is to be pitied indeed: whither shall he flee, or how shall he face his pursuers?

Breaking the Cart Ropes of Sin.— We have seen pictures of the Arabs dragging those great Ninevah bulls for Mr. Leyard, hundreds of them tugging away; and I have imagined how Pharaoh's subjects, the Egyptians, must have sweated and smarted when they had to drag some of the immense blocks of which his obelisks were composed,— thousands of men dragging one block of mason-

ry; and I seemed to have just such a load as that behind me, and it would not stir. I prayed, and it would not stir. I took to reading my Bible, but my load would not stir. It seemed stuck in the mire, and no struggling would move the awful weight. Deep ruts the wheels were in. My load would not be moved, and I did not know what to do. I cried to God in my agony, and I thought I must die if I did not get delivered from my monstrous cumber: but it would not stir. I have no drag behind me now. Glory be to God, I am not bound with a cart-rope to the old wagon. I have no hamper behind me, and as I look back for the old ruts where the cart stopped so long I cannot even see their traces. The enormous weight is not there! It is clean gone! There came One by who wore a crown of thorns: I knew him by the marks in his hands and in his feet: and he said, "Trust me, and I will set thee free." I trusted him and the enormous weight behind me was gone. It disappeared. As I was told, it sank into his sepulchre, and it lies buried there, never to come out again. My cart-rope snapped, my cords of vanity melted, I was out of harness. Then I said, "The snare is broken, and my soul hath escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler. I will tell the story of my deliverance as long as I live." I can say to-night,

> "E'er since by faith I saw the stream
> His flowing wounds supply,
> Redeeming love has been my theme,
> And shall be till I die."

Hiding Sin From God.— I can imagine a man in business calling himself a Christian about to engage in a doubtful transaction: how is he to discern the danger? Let him ask the Lord Jesus Christ to come while he is doing it. "Oh, dear no;" cries one, "I had rather he should not

come until that matter had been finished and forgotten." Then be you sure that you are moving in the wrong direction. Suppose you think of going to a certain place of amusement about which you have a question, it is easy to decide it thus:— When you take your seat your first thing should be to bow your head and ask for a blessing, and then say, "Lord, here I sit waiting for thine appearing." "Oh," say you, "I should not want the Lord to come there." Of course you would not. Then do not go where you could not wish your Lord to find you.

Sin a Poison of the Blood.— A man has a bad malady upon him, and it breaks out in his flesh. He goes to a quack, who gives him an ointment, which he applies outwardly to heal the sore till the morbid appearances vanish, and he congratulates himself on the cure, and commends the charlatan for his skill. "What a capital doctor he is, and how well my money was expended," he says; "he has taken away all that eruption." By and by the man is lying so grievously sick and ill that he does not know what to do. "Oh," thinks he to himself, "have I made a mistake?" And when the true physician comes he says, "What have been your symptoms?" He tells the tale of an eruption on his skin, and the remedies he resorted to. "Ah," says the physician, "the disease is driven inwards; you have taken the wrong course; your present symptoms are fatal; you will die. It was well that it should come out on your flesh, seeing it lurked in your constitution. When you have a disease, you had need lay the axe at the root, and not at the branches. It is not the disfigurement of the skin that should be seriously thought of as so alarming as the blood-poisoning that caused it." Forthwith he begins to deal with the real evil.

The Weight of Sin.— A very simple observation was once the means of deciding a man. He was a mechanic, and a man of a mathematical turn of mind. He had attended a meeting. The meeting was held in an upper room and on going below stairs, his attention was attracted by the beam that had supported the people, and he said to himself, "What a weight there must have been upon that!" Just at that very minute, into his mind there flashed, "And what a weight there is resting upon you!" How that thought should have followed the other, I cannot tell, but as he turned it over, it did seem to him that he had a weight of sin enough to crush him; that he could not bear up under such a weight; and that his soul would come down in ruin like many a building whose beams have not been strong enough; after enduring awhile in a condition more or less uncertain, it has given away at last.

Sin Must be Given Up.— When you land in France, there stands the *gendarme* who wants to see what you are carrying in that basket. If you attempt to push by you will soon find yourself in custody. He must know what is there; contraband goods cannot be taken in. So at the gate of mercy — which is Christ — no man can be saved if he desire to keep his sins. He must give up every false way. "Oh," saith the drunkard, "I'd like to get to heaven, but I must smuggle in this bottle somehow." "I would like to be a Christian," says another, "I do not mind taking Dr. Watts's Hymns with me, but I should like sometimes to sing a Bacchanalian song, or a lightsome serenade." "Well," cries another, "I enjoy myself on Sunday with God's people, but you must not deny me the amusements of the world during the week; I cannot give them up." "Well, then, you cannot enter, for Jesus Christ never saves us *in* our sins; he saves us *from* our sins. "Doctor," says the fool,

"make me well, but I'd like to keep my fever." "No," saith the doctor, "how can you be well while you keep the fever?" How can a man be saved from his sins while he clings to his sins? What is salvation but to be delivered from sin? Sin-lovers may seek to be saved, but they shall not be able. While they hug their sins they cannot have Christ.

Sin Means Anarchy.— Sin, if we rightly consider it, *is an upsetting of the entire order of the universe.* In your family you feel as a father that nothing can go smoothly unless there is a head whose discretion shall regulate all the members. If your child should say, "Father, I am determined as one of this family that whatever your will is I will resist it, and whatever my will is I will abide by it, and always carry it out if I can." What a family that would be! How disorganized! What a household! might we not say, what a hell upon earth! There sails to-morrow a ship from the Thames under command of a captain, wise and good, who understands the seas; but he has scarcely reached the Nore before a sailor tells him he shall not obey, that he does not intend either to reef a sail or to do anything aboard the vessel that he is bidden. "Put the fellow in irons!" Everybody says it is right. Or a passenger coming up from the saloon informs the captain that he does not approve of his authority, and throughout the whole of the voyage he intends to thwart him all he can. If there is a boat within hail put that fellow on shore, and do not be particular if he lands in a muddy place; but get rid of him somehow. Everybody feels it must be. You might as well scuttle the ship, cut holes in her sides, as tolerate for a moment that the rightful central authority should be unshipped, or that every man should determine to do what is right in his own eyes. The happiness of everybody on board that vessel will depend

upon order being kept. If one man do this and another do that, you might almost as well be shut up in a cage with tigers as be in such a vessel. Now, look at this world, it is but a floating ship on a larger scale, and say, who ought to be captain here but he that made it? His mighty hand alone can grasp that awful tiller. Who can steer this gigantic vessel over the waves of Providence — who but he? And who am I, and, my hearer, who are you, that you say, "I will ignore the Lord High Admiral; I will oppose the Captain; I will rebel against him?" Why, if all do as you do, what is to become of the whole vessel, what of the whole world?

The Scar of Sin.— A boy once went into his father's orchard, and there, in his rough play, he broke a little tree which his father valued. But, rapidly putting it together again, he managed to conceal the fact, for the disunited parts of the tree took kindly to each other, and the tree stood as before. It so happened that more than forty years afterwards he went into that garden after a storm had blown across it in the night, and he found the tree had been riven in two, and it had snapped precisely in the place where he had broken it when it was but a sapling. So there may come a crash to your character precisely in that place where you sinned when yet a lad. Ah, how often the transgressions of our youth remain within our bosoms. There lie the eggs of our young sin, and they hatch when men come into riper years. Don't be so sure that the lapse of time will consign your faults and follies to oblivion. You sow your wild oats, sir; you have got to reap them. The time that has intervened has only operated to make that evil seed spring up, and you are so much the nearer to the harvest. Time does not change the hue of sin in the sight of God. If a man could live a thousand years, the sins of his first year would be as fresh in the memory

of the Almighty as those of the last. Eternity itself will never wash out a sin.

Recklessness of Sin.— Have you never heard the story of Archæus, the Grecian despot, who was going to a feast, and on the way a messenger brought him a letter, and seriously importuned him to read it. It contained tidings of a conspiracy that had been formed against him, that he should be killed at the feast. He took the letter, and put it into his pocket. In vain the messenger urged that it was concerning serious matters. "Serious matters to-morrow," said Archæus, "feasting to-night." That night the dagger reached his heart while he had about him the warning which, had he heeded it, would have averted the peril. Alas! too many men say, "Serious things to-morrow!" They have no misgiving, but when their sport is over they will have alike the leisure and the inclination for these weighty matters. Were it not wiser, sirs, to let these grave affairs come first?

Breaking Off Sin.— I have heard of one who kept a tame leopard in his house. It had been nursed from the time it was a cub, and it gambolled about like a cat. But one day, while the master was asleep, it licked his hand. As it licked a place where the skin was thin and broken, the blood began to flow. Then all the wild instincts of the beast of the forest flashed from its furious eyes. The man suddenly woke, and saw the situation. His end was near — unless he should be quick and skilful enough to destroy the animal. Do you think he paused or hesitated? No; a loaded pistol was within his reach; so he stretched out his hand quietly, grasped it firmly, aimed it steadily, fired it instantly, and the creature lay dead at his feet. It had come to this; that he must either kill it, or it would kill him. It is so with you. Your sins begin to draw blood from you already. Those stings of conscience, that empty purse, those red eyes — all are

beginning to tell what sin can do. Not yet do you know all its horror. Before the leopard springs upon you and speedily tears you in pieces, God help you to give it up!

Secret Sin.— It is vain to think that ye can conceal your transgressions. Before high heaven, disguise is futile. Yea, the darkness hideth not; the night shineth as the day. I have known persons who have harbored a sin in their breast until it has prayed upon their constitution. They have been like the Spartan boy who had stolen a fox, and was ashamed to have it known, so he kept it within his garment, till it ate through his flesh, and he fell dead. He suffered the fox to gnaw his heart ere he would betray himself. There are those who have got a sin, if not a lie in their right hand, yea, a lie in their heart; and it is eating into their very life. They dare not confess it. If they would confess it to their God, and make restitution to those whom they have offended, they would soon come to peace; but they vainly hope that they can cover the sin, and hide it from the eyes of God and man. He that covereth his sin in this fashion shall not prosper.

The Wages of Sin.— A certain tyrant sent for one of his subjects, and said to him, "What is your employment?" He said, "I am a blacksmith." "Go home," said he, "and make me a chain of such a length." He went home; it occupied him several months, and he had no wages all the while he was making the chain, only the trouble and the pains of making it. Then he brought it to the monarch, and he said, "Go and make it twice as long." He gave him nothing to do it with, but sent him away. Again he worked on, and made it twice as long. He brought it up again, and the monarch said, "Go and make it longer still." Each time he brought it, there was nothing but the command to make it longer

still. And when he brought it up at last, the monarch said, "Take it, bind him hand and foot with it, and cast him into a furnace of fire." There were his wages for making the chain. Here is a meditation for you to-night, ye servants of the devil! Your master the devil is telling you to make a chain. Some of you have been fifty years welding the links of the chain; and he says, "Go and make it longer still. Next Sunday morning you will open that shop of yours, and put another link on; next Saturday night you will be drunk, and put another link on; next Monday you will do a dishonest action, and so you will keep on making fresh links to this chain; and when you have lived twenty more years, the devil will say, "More links on still!" And then, at last, it will be, "Take him, and bind him hand and foot, and cast him into a furnace of fire." "For the wages of sin is death."

Insincere Conviction of Sin.— There was a monk who, on a certain occasion, described himself as great a hypocrite as Judas; and a gentleman at once said, "I knew it long ago; you are just the fellow I always thought." When up jumped the monk, and said, "Don't be saying such things as those of me!" His humility was feigned, not felt. Thus people may make such a general confession as this, "I am a great sinner," who would resist any special charge brought home to their consciences, however true. Say to such a one, "You are a rogue," and he replies, "No, I'm not a rogue." "What are you, then? Are you a liar?" "Oh, no!" Are you a Sabbath-breaker? "No; nothing of the kind." And so, when you come to sift it, you find them sheltering themselves under the general term sinner, not for the purpose of making confession, but in order to evade it. This result, as you will see, is very different from a real conviction of sin.

SINNERS

Keep Out of Temptation.— You may have heard the story — but it is so good it will bear repeating — of the lady who advertised for a coachman and was waited upon by three candidates for the situation. She put to the first one this question: "I want a really good coachman to drive my pair of horses, and, therefore, I ask you how near you can drive to danger and yet be safe?" "Well," he said, "I could drive very near indeed; I could go within a foot of a precipice, without fear of any accident so long as I held the reins." She dismissed him with the remark that he would not do. To the next one who came she put the same question, "How near could you drive to danger?" Being determined to get the place, he said, "I could drive within a hair's breadth, and yet skilfully avoid any mishap." "You will not do," said she. When the third one came in, his mind was cast in another mold, so on the question being put to him, "How near could you drive to danger?" he said, "Madam, I never tried. It has always been a rule with me to drive as far from danger as I possibly can." The lady engaged him at once. In like manner I believe that the man who is careful to run no risks and to refrain from all equivocal conduct, having the fear of God in his heart, is most to be relied upon. If you are really built upon the Rock of Ages, you may meet the question without dismay, "Will ye also go away?" and you can reply without presumption, "No, Lord, I cannot and I will not leave thee; for to whom should I go, Thou hast the words of eternal life."

The Greatest Loss of All.— You do not see the loveliness of Christ, yet "he is altogether lovely." Now, I will not say one hard word, but I will tell you sorrowfully what pitiable creatures you are. I hear enchanting

music, which seems more a thing of heaven than of earth: it is one of Handel's half-inspired oratorios. Yonder sits a man, who says, "I hear nothing to commend." He has not the power to perceive the linked sweetness, the delicious harmonies of sounds. Do you blame him? No, but you who have an ear for music, say, "How I pity him: he misses half the joy of life!" Here, again, is a glorious landscape, hills and valleys, and flowing rivers, expansive lakes and undulating meadows. I bring to the point of view a friend, whom I would gratify, and I say to him, "is not that a charming scene?" Turning his head to me, he says, "I see nothing." I perceive that he cannot enjoy what is so delightful to me: he has some little sight, but he sees only what is very near, and he is blind to all beyond. Now, do I blame him? Or if he proceed to argue with me, and say, "You are very foolish to be so enthusiastic about a non-existent landscape, it is merely your excitement," shall I argue with him? Shall I be angry with him? No, but I shall shed a tear, and whisper to myself, "Great are the losses of the blind." Now, you who have never heard music in the name of Jesus, you are to be greatly pitied, for your loss is heavy. You who never saw beauty in Jesus, and who never will forever, you need all our tears. It is hell enough not to love Christ! It is the lowest abyss of Tartarus, and its fiercest flame, not to be enamored of the Christ of God. There is no heaven that is more heaven than to love Christ and to be like him, and there is no hell that is more hell than to be unlike Christ and not to want to be like him, but even to be averse to the infinite perfections of the "altogether lovely."

Too-late! — Have you never heard of the Indian in his boat upon one of the great rivers of America? Somehow his moorings had broken and his canoe was in the

power of the current. He was asleep, while his canoe was being borne rapidly along by the stream. He was sound asleep, and yet had good need to have been awake, for there was a tremendous cataract not far ahead. Persons on shore saw the canoe — saw that there was a man in it asleep; but their vigilance was of no use to the sleeper: it needed that he himself should be aware of his peril. The canoe quickened its pace, for the waters of the river grew more rapid as they approached the cataract; persons on shore began to cry out, and raise alarm on all sides, and at last the Indian was aroused. He started up, and began to use his paddle, but his strength was altogether insufficient for the struggle with the gigantic force of the waters around him. He was seen to spring upright in the boat and disappear — himself and the boat — in the fall. He had perished, for he woke too late! Some persons on their dying beds just wake up in time to see their danger, but not escape from it: they are carried right over the cataract of judgment and wrath.

Hope for Sinners.— The sailors have been pumping the vessel, the leaks are gaining, she is going down, the captain is persuaded she must be a wreck. Depressed by such evil tidings, the men refuse to work; and since the boats are all stove in and they cannot make a raft, they sit down in despair. Presently the captain has better news for them. "She will float," he says; "the wind is abating too, the pumps tell upon the water, the leak can be reached yet." See how they work; with what cheery courage they toil on, because there is hope! Soul, there is hope! *There is hope!* THERE IS HOPE! To the harlot, to the thief, to the drunkard.

The Sinner Seeing Double.— Do not, I pray you, play with time any longer. Say not "There is time enough;" for the wise man knows that time enough is little enough.

Be not like the foolish drunkard who, staggering home one night, saw his candle lit for him. "Two candles!" said he, for his drunkenness made him see double, "I will blow out one," and as he blew it out, in a moment he was in the dark. Many a man sees double through the drunkenness of sin — he thinks that he has one life to sow his wild oats in, and then the last part of life in which to turn to God; so, like a fool, he blows out the only candle that he has, and in the dark he will have to lie down forever. Haste thee, traveller, thou hast but one sun, and when that sets, thou wilt never reach thy home. God help thee to make haste now!

Deceiving One's Own Soul.— Whenever you have heard an earnest, powerful sermon, you have gone home and labored to get rid of it. A tear has stolen down your cheek now and then, and you have despised yourself for it. "Oh!" you say, "it is not manly for me to think of these things." There have been a few twitches at times which you could not help, but the moment after you have your heart like a flint, impenetrably hard and stony. Well, sir, I will give you a picture of yourself. There is a foolish farmer yonder in his house. It is the dead of night: the burglars are breaking in — men who will neither spare his life nor his treasure. There is a dog down below, chained in the yard; it barks and barks, and howls again. "I cannot be quiet," says the farmer, "my dog makes too much noise." Another howl, and yet another. He creeps out of bed, gets his loaded gun, opens the window, fires it, and kills the dog. "Ah! it is all right now," he mutters; he goes to bed, lies down, and quietly rests. "No hurt will come," he says, "now; for I have made that dog quiet." Ah! but would that he could have listened to the warning of the faithful creature. Ere long he shall feel the knife, and rue his fatal folly. So you, when God is warning you — when your

faithful conscience is doing its best to save you — you try to kill your only friend, while Satan and Sin are stealing up to the bedside of your slothfulness, ready to destroy your soul forever. What should we think of the sailor at sea, who should seek to kill all the stormy petrels, that there might be an end to all storms? Would you not say, "Poor foolish man! why those birds are sent by a kind providence to warn him of the tempest. Why needs he injure them? They cause not the tumult; it is the raging sea." So it is not your conscience that is guilty of the disturbance in your heart, it is your sin; and your conscience, acting true to its character, as God's index in your soul, tells you that all is wrong. Oh, that ye would arise, and take the warning, and fly to Jesus while the hour of mercy lasts.

Heathen in Cities.— In London, the city missionaries will bear witness that while they can sometimes get at the wives, yet there are thousands of husbands, who are necessarily away at the time of the missionary's visit, who have not a word of rebuke, or exhortation, or invitation, or encouragement ever sounding in their ears at all, from the day of their birth to the day of their death; and they might, for all practical purposes, as well have been born in the centre of Africa as in the city of London; for they are without God, without hope,— aliens from the commonwealth of Isreal; far off, not by wicked works only, but by dense ignorance of God.

A Hospital for Sinners.— We know of a place in England, still existing, where there is a dole of bread served to every passer-by who chooses to ask for it. Whoever he may be, he has but to knock at the door of St. Cross Hospital, and there is the dole of bread for him. Jesus Christ so loveth sinners that he has built a St. Cross Hospital, so that, whenever a sinner is hungry, he has but to knock and have his wants supplied. Nay, he has

done better; he has attached to this hospital of the cross a bath; and whenever a soul is black and filthy, it has but to go there and be washed. The fountain is always full, always efficacious. There is no sinner who ever went into it and found it, could not wash away his stains. Sins which were scarlet and crimson have all disappeared, and the sinner has been whiter than snow. As if this were not enough, there is attached to this hospital of the cross a wardrobe; and a sinner, making application simply as a sinner, with nothing in his hand, but being just empty and naked, he may come and be clothed from head to foot. And if he wishes to be a soldier, he may not merely have an under-garment, but he may have armor which shall cover him from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. Nay, if he wants a sword he shall have that given to him, and a shield too. There is nothing that his heart can desire, that is good for him, which he shall not receive. He shall have spending-money so long as he lives, and he shall have an eternal heritage of glorious treasure when he enters into the joy of his Lord.

Secret Sinners.— There is the table set for *secret sinners,* and here the old rule is observed. At that table, in a room well darkened, I see a young man sitting to-day, and Satan is the servitor, stepping in so noiselessly, that no one would hear him. He brings in the first cup — and O how sweet it is! It is the cup of secret sin. "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant." How sweet that morsel, eaten all alone! Was there ever one that rolled so delicately under the tongue? That is the first; after that, he brings in another — the wine of an unquiet conscience. The man's eyes are opened. He says, "What have I done? What have I been doing? Ah," cries this Achan, "the first cup you brought me, I saw sparkling in *that* a wedge of

gold, and a goodly Babylonish garment; and I thought, 'O, I must have that;' but now my thought is, What shall I do to hide this, where shall I put it? I must dig. Ay, I must dig deep as hell before I shall hide it, for sure enough it will be discovered."

The grim governor of the feast is bringing in a massive bowl, filled with a black mixture. The secret sinner drinks, and is confounded; he fears his sin will find him out. He has no peace, no happiness, he is full of uneasy fear; he is afraid that he shall be detected. He dreams at night that there is some one after him; there is a voice whispering in his ear, and telling him, "I know all about it; I will tell it." He thinks, perhaps, that the sin which he has committed in secret will break out to his friends; the father will know it, the mother will know it. Ay, it may be even the physician will tell the tale, and blab out the wretched secret. For such a man there is no rest. He is always in dread of arrest.

A Houseless Soul.— Have you ever seen a poor girl at midnight sitting down on a doorstep crying? Somebody passes by, and says, "Why do you sit here?" "I have no house, sir. I have no home." "Where is your father?" "My father's dead, sir." "Where is your mother?" "I have no mother, sir." "Have you no friends?" "No friends at all." Have you no house?" "No; I have none. I am houseless." And she shivers in the chill air, and gathers her poor ragged shawl around her, and cries again, "I have no house — I have no home." Would you not pity her? Would you blame her for her tears? Ah! there are some of you that have houseless souls here this morning. It is something to have a houseless body; but to think of a houseless soul! Methinks I see you in eternity sitting on the door-step of heaven. An angel says, "What! have you no house

to live in?" "No house," says the poor soul. "Have you no father?" "No; God is not my father; and there is none beside him." "Have you no mother?" "No; the church is not my mother; I never sought her ways, nor loved Jesus. I have neither father nor mother." "Have you no house, then?" "No; I am a houseless soul."

Transient Feeling.— I know there are some of you that can scarcely keep your seats at the thought of your iniquities; and you have almost vowed, some of you, that this day you will seek God, and the first thing you will do, will be to climb to your chamber, and shut the door, and seek the Lord. Ah, but I remember a story of one, who remarked to a minister, what a wonderful thing it was to see so many people weeping. "Nay," said he, "I will tell you something more wonderful still, that so many will forget all they wept about when they get outside the door." And you will do this. Still, when you have done it, you will recollect that you have not been without the strivings of God's Spirit.

True Religion Only Safeguard of Character.— A great number of those who perish were once just the very people whom, if natural disposition had any thing to do with it, we should have expected to see in heaven. Why, there is one here who in his youth was a child of many follies. Often did his mother weep over him, and cry and groan over her son's wanderings; for what with a fierce high spirit that could brook neither bit nor bridle, what with perpetual rebellions and ebullitions of hot anger, she said, "My son, my son, what wilt thou be in thy riper years? Surely thou wilt dash in pieces law and order, and be a disgrace to thy father's name." He grew up; in youth he was wild and wanton, but, wonder of wonders, on a sudden he became a new man, changed, altogether changed; no more like what he was before

than angels are like lost spirits. He sat at her feet, he cheered her heart, and the lost, fiery one became gentle, mild, humble as a little child, and obedient to God's commandments. You say, wonder of wonders! But there is another here. He was a fair youth: when but a child he talked of Jesus; often when his mother had him on her knee he asked her questions about heaven; he was a prodigy, a wonder of piety in his youth. As he grew up, the tear rolled down his cheek under any sermon; he could scarcely bear to hear of death without a sigh; sometimes his mother caught him, as she thought, in prayer alone. And what is he now? He has just this very morning come from sin; he has become the debauched desperate villain, has gone far into all manner of wickedness and lust, and sin, and has become more damnably corrupt than other men could have made him; only his own evil spirit, once confined, has now developed itself: he has learned to play the lion in his manhood, as once he played the fox in his youth.

The Point of View.— Some men seem to be born with two characters. I remarked when in the library at Trinity College, Cambridge, a very fine statue of Lord Byron. The librarian said to me, "Stand here, sir." I looked, and I said, "what a fine intellectual countenance! What a grand genius he was!" "Come here," he said, "to the other side." Ah! what a demon! There stands the man that could defy the deity." He seemed to have such a scowl and such a dreadful leer in his face; even as Milton would have painted Satan when he said — "Better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven." I turned away and said to the librarian, "Do you think the artist designed this?" "Yes," he said, "he wished to picture the two characters — the great, the grand, the almost superhuman genius that he possessed, and yet the enormous mass of sin that was in his soul."

Three Fools.— I will show you three fools. One is yonder soldier, who has been wounded on the field of battle, grievously wounded, well nigh unto death; the surgeon is by his side, and the soldier asks him a question. Listen, and judge of his folly. What question does he ask? Does he raise his eyes with eager anxiety and inquire if the wound be mortal, if the practitioner's skill can suggest the means of healing, or if the remedies are within reach and the medicine at hand? No, nothing of the sort; strange to tell, he asks, "Can you inform me with what sword I was wounded, and by what Russian I have been thus grievously mauled? I want," he adds, "to learn every minute particular respecting the origin of my wound." The man is delirious or his head is affected. Surely such questions at such a time are proof enough that he is bereft of his senses.

There is another fool. The storm is raging, the ship is flying impetuous before the gale, the dark scud moves swiftly over head, the masts are creaking, the sails are rent to rags, and still the gathering tempest grows more fierce. Where is the captain? Is he busily engaged on the deck, is he manfully facing the danger, and skillfully suggesting means to avert it? No, sir, he has retired to his cabin, and there with studious thoughts and crazy fancies he is speculating on the place where this storm took its rise. "It is mysterious, this wind; no one ever yet," he says, "has been able to discover it." And, so reckless of the vessel, the lives of the passengers, and his own life, he is careful only to solve his curious questions. The man is mad, sir; take the rudder from his hand; he is clean gone mad! If he should ever run on shore, shut him up as a hopeless lunatic.

The third fool I shall doubtless find among yourselves. You are sick and wounded with sin, you are in the storm and hurricane of Almighty vengeance, and yet the

question which you would ask of me, this morning, would be, "Sir, what is the origin of evil?" You are mad, sir, spiritually mad.

Serving Against Light.— The late lamented murder of Williams at Erromanga, was brought about by the evil doings of a trader who had gone to the island, and who was also the son of a missionary. He had become reckless in his habits, and treated the islanders with such barbarity and cruelty, that they revenged his conduct upon the next white man who put his foot on their shore; and the beloved Williams, one of the last of the martyrs, died a victim of the guilt of those who had gone before him. The worst of men are those who, having much light, still run astray.

The Lost.— Now I will tell you the people whom Christ will save — they are those who are *lost to themselves.* Just imagine a ship at sea passing through a storm: the ship leaks, and the captain tells the passengers he fears they are lost. If they are far away from shore, and have sprung a leak, they pump with all their might as long as they have any strength remaining; they seek to keep down the devouring element; they still think that they are not quite lost while they have the power to use the pumps. At last they see the ship cannot be saved; they give it up for lost, and leap into the boats. The boats are floating for many a day, full of men who have but little food to eat. "They are lost," we say, "lost out at sea." But they do not think so; they still cherish a hope that perhaps some stray ship may pass that way and pick them up. There is a ship in the horizon; they strain their eyes to look at her; they lift each other up; they wave a flag; they rend their garments to make something which shall attract attention; but she passed away; black night comes, and they are forgotten. At length the very last mouthful of food has been consumed;

strength fails them, and they lay down their oars in the boat, and lay themselves down to die. You can imagine then how well they understand the awful meaning of the term —"lost." As long as they had any strength left they felt they were not lost; as long as they could see a sail they felt there was yet hope; while there was yet a mouldy biscuit left, or a drop of water, they did not give up all for lost. Now the biscuit is gone, and the water is gone; now strength is departed, and the oar lies still: they lie down to die by each other's side, mere skeletons; things that should have been dead days ago, if they had died when all enjoyment of life had ceased. Now they know, I say, what it is to be lost, and across the shoreless waters they seem to hear their death-knell pealing forth that awful word, Lost! lost! lost! Now, in a spiritual sense, these are the people Christ came to save.

The Sinner's Emancipation.— In the bad old times in the south a free negro was forced to carry his papers about with him, but in that blessed day when the Jubilee trumpet sounded, and every African throughout the States was free, I can hardly imagine some little squire or country judge saying to the emancipated negro, "Sam, I will make out papers for you, and for your consolation I will put my name 'Jeremiah Stiggins' at the bottom." Why, the emancipated negro would have said, "I have seen the proclamation which has the name Abraham Lincoln, the President of the United States, at its foot, and I do not care a button for your name or anybody else's." Having believed in the Lord Jesus, I have salvation upon the authority of the Word of God, and on the Holy Ghost's authority I know that there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, and therefore I would not thank an angel for his oath if he tendered it in confirmation.

God's Message Through Mothers.— The first messenger that some of us had was that fond woman, upon whose breast in infancy we hung. We should never breathe the word "mother" without grateful emotions. How can we forget that tearful eye when she warned us to escape from the wrath to come? We thought her lips right eloquent; others might not think so, but they certainly were eloquent to us. How can we ever forget when she bowed her knee, and with her arms about our neck, prayed for us: "Oh! that my son might live before Thee." Nor can her frown be effaced from our memory, that solemn, loving frown when she rebuked our budding iniquities; and her smiles have never faded from our recollection, the beaming of her countenance when she rejoiced to see some good thing in us toward the Lord God of Israel. Mothers often become potent messengers from God, and I think each Christian mother should ask herself in secret whether the Lord hath not a message to give through her to her sons and to her daughters. And did you despise that messenger? Had you the hardihood to reject God when he spoke in this way, when he selected one so near and so dear, who could speak so well, and could talk to that tender instinct, which respects and hallows a mother's love?

Be Sure of the Foundation.— Certain parts of the South of France are marvellously like Palestine, and perhaps at the present moment they are more like what the Holy Land was in Christ's day than the Holy Land now is. When I reached Cannes last year I found that there had been a flood in the town. This flood did not come by reason of a river being swollen, but through a deluge of rain. A waterspout seems to have burst upon the hill-side, tearing up earth, and rocks, and stones, and then hurrying down to the sea. It rushed across the railway station and poured down the street which led

to it, drowning several persons in its progress. When I was there a large hotel — I should think five stories high — was shored up with timber, and was evidently doomed; for when this stream rushed down the narrow street it undermined the lower courses of the building, and as there were no foundations at all able to bear such a test the whole erection was rendered unsafe. The Savior had some such case in his mind's eye. A torrent of water would come tearing down the side of the mountain, and if a house was built on the mere earth, it would be carried away directly, but if it were fastened into the rock so that it became part and parcel of it, then the flood might rush all around it, but it would not shake the walls. Beloved builder of a house for your soul, your house is so situated that one of these days there must come great pressure upon it. "How do you know?" Well, I know that the house wherein my soul lives is pitched just where winds blow, and waves rise, and storms beat. Where is yours? Do you live in a snug corner? Yes, but one of these times you will find that the snug corner will be no more shielded than the open riverside; for God so orders providence that every man has his test sooner or later. It may be that you think yourself past temptation, but the idea is a delusion, as time will show. Perhaps from the very fact that you seem quite out of the way, a peculiar temptation may befall you. Therefore, I do pray you, because of the exposed condition of your life's building, build upon a good foundation.

Foolish Objections.— You see a man put into the condemned cell at Newgate, and you go in and tell him that Her Majesty presents him with a free pardon. I warrant you he will not put his hand to his brow, and say, "Well, but I think there is this or that objection to my accepting it." "No," thinks he, "if there is any ob-

jection, let those find it out that like; it is no business of mine." And so with the soul that is bidden to come to Christ; I say, let it come, objections or no objections, and if there be objections, let somebody else find them out, but as for thee, poor sinner, don't cover thy face from Jesus, but come as thou art, just as thou art, and say, "Here I am, my Savior: if thou canst save — and I believe thou canst — save me. At any rate, if I perish, I will perish trusting in thee."

Christ Drawing the Sinner.— There are times with men, before conversion, when a sort of softness steals over them, when they feel as if they could not hold out much longer against appeals so reasonable and so gracious. A mother's prayers come up, perhaps her dying words are heard again; or the death of a little child touches the parent's heart as nothing else has done. The man is under holy influences, he knows not how; there are angels in the air around him, tho there are devils in the heart within him. The man cannot be at peace in sin; he is restless till he finds rest in Jesus. It is the Lord drawing all the while: and after the Lord has appeared to us we see it to be so.

The Hypocrite.— Look at the hypocrite: he is afraid of being found out. He has to do everything most primly and demurely, lest he should be suspected. If you paint your face, you must take care neither to cry nor lough, lest you crack the enamel. If you wear shoddy clothing, you must not run or jump, for your garments might split. Accidents must be guarded against when you deal with shams. A hypocrite will censure you very severely for having smiled just now; and he will condemn me outright for being so wicked as to make you smile on a Sunday. Poor soul, he must keep up his propriety, for it is all he has. In these times of bad trade many who are ready to fail are afraid to lower their expenditure

for fear their poverty should be suspected, and so they keep up a good appearance to stave off bankruptcy as long as they may. If they were solvent they would not be so fearful. If your conscience condemn you not, then you enjoy a blessed ease of spirit, because the truth is in you.

A Note of Warning.— A buoy off the Mumbles in South Wales bears a bell which is meant to warn mariners of a dangerous rock. This bell is quiet enough in ordinary weather; but when the winds are out, and the great waves rush in towards the shore, its solemn tones are heard for miles around as it swings to and fro in the hands of the sea. I believe there are true men who are silent when everything is calm, who will be forced to speak when the wild winds are out. Permit me to assure you that a storm is raging now, and it is growing worse and worse. If I rightly read the signs of the times, it is meet that every bell should ring out its warning note lest souls be lost upon the rocks of error.

The Sinner's Down Hill.— In the town where I was brought up there is a very steep hill. You could scarcely get out of the town without going down a hill, but one is specially precipitous, and I remember once hearing a cry in the streets, for a huge wagon had rolled over the horses that were going down the hill with it. The load had crushed the creatures that were supposed to draw it. There comes a time with a man when it is not so much he that consumes the drink as the drink that consumes him; he is drowned in his cups, sucked down by that which he himself sucked in. A man was voracious, perhaps, in food, and at last his gluttony swallowed him; at one grim morsel he went down the throat of the old dragon of selfish greed. Or the man was lustful, and at last his vice devoured him. It is an awful thing when it is not the man that follows the

devil, but the devil that drives the man before him as tho he were his laden ass. The man's worst self, that had been kept in the rear and put under restraint, at last gets up and comes to the front, and the better self, if ever he had such, is dragged on an unwilling captive at the chariot wheels of its destroyer.

The Folly of the Caviller.— To be always using the sieve but never to be using the mill is starving work: to be always searching after adulterations, but never to drink of the genuine milk, is a foolish habit. Caviling is a curse, and carping is a crime. Escape from it while yet it is but as a cord of vanity, lest it come to be a cart-rope which shall bind you fast.

Ingratitude of the Sinner.— The Lord saith, "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but these my creatures do not know, my favored ones do not consider." Why, you have no such forbearance with others as God has had with you. You would not keep a dog if it never followed at your heel, but snarled at you: you would not even keep a potter's vessel if it held no water, and was of no service to you; you would break it in pieces, and throw it on the dunghill. As for yourself, you are fearfully and wonderfully made, both as to your body and as to your soul, and yet you have been of no service to your Maker, nor even thought of being of service to him. Still, he has spared you all these years, and it has never occurred to you that there has been any wonderful forbearance in it. Assuredly, O man, thou despisest the long-suffering of thy God.

The Foolish Builder.— The foolish builder had *nothing to resist outward circumstances.* On summer days his house was a favorite resort, and was considered to be quite as good as his neighbor's in all respects. Frequently he

rubbed his hands and said, "I do not see but what my house is quite as good as his, and perhaps a little better: the fact is, I had a few pounds to spare which I did not bury in the ground as he did, and with it I have bought many a little ornament, so that my habitation has a finer look than his building." So it seemed; but when the torrent came raging down the mountain side, his building, having nothing wherewith to resist the violence of the flood, fell down at once, and not a trace of it remained, when the storm had ceased. Thus do men fail because they offer no resistance to forces which drive them into sin; the great current of evil finds in them victims, and not opponents.

The Sinner's Refuge.— A man has by accident killed his fellow-man. The next of kin to the murdered man will be sure to kill the man-slayer out of revenge, if he can get at him. Therefore the poor homicide takes flight as quickly as he can towards the city of refuge. How his heart beats, how his footsteps bound, how he flies with all his might. There is a handpost with the word "Refuge" upon it, and on he continues his way. But, presently, while he is running, he turns his head, and finds that the avenger of blood is after him. He sees that he is gaining upon him, he feels that he will probably overtake him. Oh! how he picks his steps lest he should trip against a stone, how he skims the ground, swift as a doe. He runs until he can see the city gates. "That is the fair CITY OF REFUGE," saith he. But, he does not rest then, for a sight of the city will not secure him, so he quickens his speed, as if he would outstrip the wind, till he shoots through the archway, and he is in the broad street of the city. Now he stops. Now he breathes. Now he wipes the hot sweat from his brow. "Now I am safe," saith he, "for no avenger of blood dares cross that threshold; he that once escapes here is delivered."

So with the sinner when sin pursues him, when he discovers that he has offended God. He hears the furious coursers of divine vengeance coming on swiftly behind him, and his conscience flies, and his soul speeds towards the cross. He gets a little hope. He hears of a Savior; but that is not enough. He will never rest, he will never say he is at peace, until he has passed the gate of faith, and can say, "Now I do believe that Jesus died for me."

The Sinner's Folly.— What shall it profit any man what fortune soever he may have amassed, if he lose his soul? Think ye that riches possessed in this world will procure any respect in the nether rgions? I have heard that in the old Fleet Prison the *swell* who was put in jail for ten thousand pounds thought himself a gentleman in comparison with those common fellows who were put in for some paltry debt of twenty or five-and-twenty pounds. There are no such distinctions in hell. You who can boast your talents of gold and talents of silver, if ye are cast away, shall be as complete wrecks as those who never had doit or stiver, but lived and died in privation and poverty.

The Folly of Sinners.— A man has fallen overboard from a ship, and when he is drowning, some sailor throws him a rope, and there it is. Well, he says, in the first place, "I do not like that rope; I don't think that rope was made at the best manufactory; there is some tar on it too, I do not like it; and in the next place, I do not like that sailor that threw the rope over, I am sure he is not a kind-hearted man, I do not like the look of him at all;" and then comes a gurgle and a groan, and down he is in the bottom of the sea; and when he was drowned, they said, that it served him right, if he would not lay hold of the rope, but would be making such foolish and absurd objections, when it was a matter of life and death. Then on his own head be his blood.

The Doom of the Impenitent.— In vain did Noah warn them that the waters would surely come; he seemed unto them as one that mocked, and they laughed at him. Even so, when I preached of the resurrection to you this morning, some of you may have mocked, and thought that I was but pursuing a wild reverie of imagination. Ah! but how different was their tune, when the rains fell, when "the fountains of the great deep were broken up!" They doubtless changed their notes, when the clouds began to empty themselves in fury, when the very earth did crack, and its bowels were dissolved, and the mighty fluid gushed up to devour them all. Did they think Noah was a fool, when the last man stood on the last mountain-top, and cried in vain for help? I saw some time ago, a master-picture, which I think time will never erase from my memory. It was a picture of a man who had been climbing up to the top of the last mountain, and the floods were coming around him. He had his old father on his back; his wife was clasping him round his waist, and he had one arm round her; she held one child at her breast, and with her other hand she grasped another. In the picture was represented one child just letting go, the wife dropping, and the father clinging to a tree on the top of the hill; the branches were breaking, and it was being torn up by the roots. Such a scene of agony I never saw depicted before; yet such a scene was likely enough to have been real when the waters entirely covered the earth. They had climbed up to the top of the last hill; and now they sank. They had climbed up to the top of the last hill; and now they sank. False hopes gave place to fell despair. And so it will be with you, ye careless ones, unless ye take shelter in the ark.

SORROWS

Sorrow Changed to Song.— There was a woman whose life was exceedingly sorrowful. She was an Eastern wife, and her husband had been foolish enough to have a second mistress in the house. The woman of whom we speak, a holy woman, a woman of refined and delicate mind, a poetess, indeed, of no mean order — this poor woman, having no children, was the constant butt of her rival, whose sneering spiteful remarks chaffed and chafed her.

Her adversary, it is said, "vexed her sore to make her afraid." Tho her husband was exceedingly kind to her, yet as with a sword that cut her bones did she go continually. She was a woman of a sorrowful spirit, her spirit being broken. Still, "she feared the Lord exceedingly," and she went up to God's house, and it was in God's house that she received, what was to her, perhaps, provided we take all the circumstances into consideration, the greatest blow of her life.

If it was from her rival that she received the harshest word, it was from the High Priest of God that she received this hardest blow. As she stood there praying, using no vocal sound, but her lips moving, the High Priest — an easy soul, who had brought his own family to ruin by his easiness — little knowing her grief, told her that she was drunken. A woman to whom the thought of such sin would have been bitter as gall, it must have smitten her as with the chill blast of death, that God's priest had said she was drunken.

But, as you will all remember, the Lord did not break the leaf that was driven to and fro. To her there came a comfortable promise. Ere long that woman stood there to sing.

SOUL WINNING

Sowing and Reaping.— Sometimes we lie passive, like the ploughed fields, and then our divine Sower casts into us the living seed; but soon other days arrive, when we are active, and yield unto God the results of his grace experienced in former days. It ought to be so. To you, beloved workers in the Mission-hall, or the Sunday-school, there will be a time of sowing; not much may be accomplished, tho a great deal of effort may be put forth. To me in preaching there are times for sowing, and nothing else but sowing; few seem to be the green blades which spring up around me. Perhaps a year may intervene before the worker shall see any reward for his toil: "The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruits of the earth." The missionary upon his district, the Bible-woman on her round, may see no manifest effect produced by daily teaching; but harvest and seedtime are tied together in a sure knot. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Brethren, believe that, and be of good cheer. "Your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Won by His Parents' Love.— I have heard of a young man who had grown up and left the parental roof, and through evil influences, had been enticed into holding skeptical views. His father and mother were both earnest Christians, and it almost broke their hearts to see their son so opposed to the Redeemer. On one occasion they induced him to go with them to hear a celebrated minister. He accompanied them simply to please them, and for no higher motive. The sermon happened to be upon the glories of heaven. It was a very extraordinary sermon, and was calculated to make every Christian in the

audience to leap for joy. The young man was much gratified with the eloquence of the preacher, but nothing more; he gave him credit for superior oratorical ability, and was interested in the sermon, but felt none of its power. He chanced to look at his father and mother during the discourse, and was surprised to see them weeping. He could not imagine why they, being Christian people, should sit and weep under a sermon which was most jubilant in its strain. When he reached hime, he said, "Father, we have had a capital sermon, but I could not understand what could make you sit there and cry, and my mother too?" His father said, "My dear son, I certainly had no reason to weep concerning myself, nor your mother, but I could not help thinking all through the sermon about you, for alas, I have no hope that you will be a partaker in the bright joys which await the righteous. It breaks my heart to think that you will be shut out of heaven." His mother said, "The very same thoughts crossed my mind, and the more the preacher spoke of the joys of the saved, the more I sorrowed for my dear boy that he should never know what they were." That touched the young man's heart, led him to seek his father's God, and before long he was at the same communion table, rejoicing in the God and Savior whom his parents worshipped. The travail comes before the bringing forth; the earnest anxiety, the deep emotion within, precede our being made the instrumnts of the salvation of others.

Fitting Ourselves to Save Others.— A man is drowning. I am on London Bridge. If I spring from the parapet and can swim, I can save him; but suppose I cannot swim, can I render any service by leaping into sudden and certain death with the sinking man? I am disqualified from helping him till I have the ability to do so. There is a school over yonder. Well, the first inquiry

of him who is to be the master must be, "Do I know myself that which I profess to teach?" Do you call that inquiry selfish? Surely it is a most unselfish selfishness, grounded upon common sense. Indeed, the man who is not so selfish as to ask himself, "Am I qualified to act as a teacher?" would be guilty of gross selfishness in putting himself into an office which he was not qualified to fill. I will suppose an illiterate person going into the school, and saying, "I will be master here and take the pay," and yet he cannot teach the children to read or write. Would he not be very selfish in not seeing to his own fitness? But surely it is not selfishness that would make a man stand back and say, "No, I must first go to school myself, otherwise it is but a mockery of the children for me to attempt to teach them any thing." This is no selfishness, then, when looked at aright, which makes us see to our own salvation, for it is the basis from which we operate for the good of others.

Saved Souls Most Useful.— A man with no sensibility or compassion for other men's souls, may accidentally be the means of a conversion; the good word which he utters will not cease to be good because the speaker had no right to declare God's statutes. The bread and meat which were brought to Elijah were not less nourishing because the ravens brought them, but the ravens remained ravens still. A hard-hearted man may say a good thing which God will bless, but, as a rule, those who bring souls to Christ are those who first of all have felt an agony of desire that souls should be saved.

The Lost Redeemed.— Let me tell you a story of what once happened to Mr. Vanderkist, a city missionary, who toils all night long to do good in that great work. There had been a drunken broil in the street; he stepped between the men to part them, and said something to a woman who stood there concerning how dreadful a thing

it was that men should thus be intemperate. She walked with him a little way, and he with her, and she began to tell him such a tale of woe and sin too, how she had been lured away from her parents' home in Somersetshire, and had been brought up here to her soul's eternal hurt. He took her home with him, and taught her the fear and love of Christ; and what was the first thing she did, when she returned to the paths of godliness, and found Christ to be the sinner's Savior? She said, "Now I must go home to my friends." Her friends were written to; they came to meet her at the station at Bristol, and you can hardly conceive what a happy meeting it was. The father and mother had lost their daughter; they had never heard from her; and there she was, brought back by the agency of this Institution, and restored to the bosom of her family.

Christ Rejoices When the Christian Saves a Soul.— The Lord Jesus must take great pleasure in the attempts of his servants to seek and to save souls: for they are learning to be shepherds like himself. When our King, Edward III., heard that the Black Prince was having a hard battle with the French, he smiled to think that his son was in a place where he could show his valor. When he was entreated to send off reinforcements, he refused; for he wished his son to have the undivided honors of the day. The Lord Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, puts some of his chosen into places of great peril, and he does not seem to send them all the help they could desire, in order that they may prove their faith and consecration, and thus earn their spurs. He takes a brotherly pleasure in the courage and faith which he himself has wrought in them. All the valor of Christ's soldiers is given them by himself, and all that it achieves is to be attributed to him; yet he finds joy in seeing them exercise their graces. Like as a father delights to see his boy take prize after

prize at the University, like as a friend delights to see his friend elected to one honorable position after another, so does Jesus rejoice in the honors earned by his servants in the field of service. When we save a soul from death, we may be sure that Jesus, the Savior, rejoices in the deed.

Joy of Soul-Winning.— I do not know any thing that can make a man forget his pain and weariness like grasping the hand of a sinner saved. "Oh," saith the saved one, "God Almighty bless you! you have brought me to Jesus." This nerves us to new effort. I speak here from experience, for yesterday evening, when I was thinking of this subject, I was myself somewhat dull through pain and weakness, and as God would have it, I took up the Report of the Baptist Missionary Society, which will be issued to you on the first of June, and as I glanced over it, I saw my own name. It seems that our missionary in San Domingo has had a discouraging year, but it was lighted up with one most pleasing incident. A man had come down from the interior of Hayti to ask for baptism. Finding him to be a most intelligent Christian, well instructed in the gospel, the missionary asked how he came to know anything about it. In reply he told him that he had fallen in with a sermon translated into the French language which was preached by Mr. Spurgeon.

O friends, I was dull no longer. I had meat to eat. Had an angel stood in the study, I could not have felt more delighted with his visit than I did when I read of a sinner saved. Here was a sermon translated into French, which was carried far away to Hayti, I do not know how, and there was read by a Romanist, who found by it salvation. God bless him! You cannot faint after such a success; can you?

HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit Invincible.— We have not to think of quantity. As an illustration: give me fire, I will not bargain for a furnace, give me but a single candle, and a city or a forest may soon be in a blaze. A spark is quite sufficient to begin with, for fire multiplies itself; so give us the truth, a single voice, and the Holy Spirit with it, and none can say where the sacred conflagration will end. One Jonah sufficed to subdue all Nineveh by one monotonous sentence oft repeated, and despite the weakness of our present instrumentality, if God does but bless the gospel, there is no reason why it should not speedily be felt by the whole of London.

Influence of the Spirirt.— Have you ever heard the argument used by a good old Christian against an infidel doctor? The doctor said there was no soul, and asked, "Did you ever see a soul?" "No," said the Christian. "Did you ever hear a soul?" "No." "Did you ever smell a soul?" "No." "Did you ever taste a soul?" "No." "Did you ever feel a soul?" "Yes," said the man —"I feel I have one within me." "Well," said the doctor, "there are four senses against one; you have only one on your side." "Very well," said the Christian, "Did you ever see a pain?" "No." "Did you ever hear a pain?" "No." "Did you ever smell a pain?" "No." "Did you ever taste a pain?" "No." "Did you ever feel a pain?" "Yes." "And that is quite enough, I suppose, to prove there is a pain?" "Yes." So the worldling says there is no Holy Ghost, because he cannot see it. Well, but we feel it. You say that is fanaticism, and that we never felt it. Suppose you tell me that honey is bitter, I reply, "No, I am sure you cannot have tasted it; taste it and try." So with

the Holy Ghost; if you did but feel his influence you would no longer say there is no Holy Spirit, because you cannot see it.

The Loving Comforter.— I am in distress, and I want consolation. Some passer-by hears of my sorrow, and he steps within, sits down, and essays to cheer me; he speaks soothing words, but he loves me not; he is a stranger; he knows me not at all; he has only come in to try his skill. And what is the consequence? His words run o'er me like oil upon a slab of marble, they are like the pattering rain upon the rock; they do not break my grief; it stands unmoved as adamant, because he has no love for me. But let some one who loves me dear as his own life, come and plead with me, then truly his words are music; they taste like honey: he knows the password of the doors of my heart, and my ear is attentive to every word. I catch the intonation of each syllable as it falls, for it is like the harmony of the harps of heaven. Oh! there is a voice in love, it speaks a language which is its own: it has an idiom and a brogue which none can mimic; wisdom cannot imitate it; oratory cannot attain unto it; it is love alone which can reach the mourning heart; love is the only handkerchief which can wipe the mourner's tears away. And is not the Holy Ghost a loving comforter?

STRENGTH

Husks of Men.— There is scarce a *man* alive now upon this earth; there are plenty to be found who call themselves men, but they are the husks of men, the life has gone from them, the precious kernel seems to have departed. The littleness of Christians of this age results from the littleness of their consecration to Christ. The age of John Owen was the day of great preachers; but let me tell you, that that was the age of great consecration. Those great preachers whose names we remember, were

men who counted nothing their own; they were driven out from their benefices, because they could not conform to the established church, and they gave up all they had willingly to the Lord. They were hunted from place to place; the disgraceful five-mile act would not permit them to come within five miles of any market town; they wandered here and there to preach the gospel to a few poor sinners, being fully given up to their Lord. Those were foul times; but they promised they would walk the road, fair or foul, and they did walk it knee deep in mud; and they would have walked it if it had been knee deep in blood too. They became great men; and if we were, as they were, wholly given up to God — if we could say of ourselves, "From the crown of my head to the sole of my foot, there is not a drop of blood that is not wholly God's; all my time, all my talents, every thing I have is God's"— if we could say that, we should be strong like Samson for the *consecrated must be strong.*

Consecration Source of Strength.— The strongest man in all the world is a consecrated man? Even tho he may consecrate himself to a wrong object, yet if it be a thorough consecration, he will have strength — strength for evil, it may be, but still strength. In the old Roman wars with Pyrrhus, you remember an ancient story of self-devotion. There was an oracle which said that victory would attend that army whose leader should give himself up to death. Decius, the Roman consul, knowing this, rushed into the thickest of the battle, that his army might overcome by his dying. The prodigies of valor which he performed are proofs of the power of consecration. The Romans at that time seemed to be every man a hero, because every man was a consecrated man. They went to battle with this thought —"I will conquer or die; the name of Rome is written on my heart; for my country I am prepared to live, or for that to shed

my blood." And no enemies could ever stand against them. If a Roman fell there were no wounds in his back, but all in his breast. His face, even in cold death, was like the face of a lion, and when looked upon it was of terrible aspect. They were men consecrated to their country; they were ambitious to make the name of Rome the noblest word in human language; and consequently the Roman became a giant. And to this day let a man get a purpose within him, I care not what his purpose is, and let his whole soul be absorbed by it, and what will he not do? You that are "every thing by turns and nothing long," that have nothing to live for, soulless carcases that walk this earth and waste its air, what can you do? Why nothing. But the man who knows what he is at, and has his mark, speeds to it "like an arrow from a bow shot by an archer strong." Nought can turn him from his design. How much more is this true if I limit the description to that which is peculiar to the Christian — consecration to God! Oh! what strength that man has who is dedicated to God!

Strength in Consecration.— I have seen a Christian woman most useful in a class, bringing to the Savior many of the girls whom she has taught; but on a sudden a change has come, there have been no conversions, and for years the class has dwindled away, and nothing has come of it. If enquiry were to be made, it would be found that the consecration of the teacher had declined. She no longer spoke with tearful eye and earnest heart, seeking to lead those girls to Christ; and because her consecration was gone, her strength was gone.

Our Strength in God.— Listen to a parable: — A certain young man traded, and in all things he prospered for a while. In all his dealings he was wise and prudent, and none were able to overreach him. The cause of his wisdom was that he had a father, a man of singular knowl-

edge, of great experience, of large wealth, and great influence. His son never entered upon a transaction without consulting his fathr. Whenever he felt himself at all in difficulty, he hastened to ask counsel of his father. Whenever he needed money to meet a sudden demand, he drew upon his father. Their love to each other was more and more manifest as the one trusted and the other helped. Does anybody wonder that the young man grew rich? But after a while the son grew cold towards his father, and seldom advised with him. There was no quarrel, but the young man was growing independent of his father, and preferred to act upon his own judgment. He failed to ask and to receive substantial help, which would have been freely given; and he fell into great losses, which might readily have been avoided. The young man became weak as others; he was the prey of deceivers; he spent labor and thought and substance upon matters which ended in failure; he grew poorer and poorer, till he trembled on the verge of bankruptcy.

Do you wonder? Do you pity him? Do you see in him your own portrait? If so, take ample warning now and change it all, and say of your heavenly Father: He is my friend and counselor, and to him as to no one else I do continually resort.

Strong When God Leads.— When a clan of Highlanders was led to battle by their chief he had only to show them the enemy and with one tremendous shout they leaped upon them like lions. It is so with the people of God. When God is with us then we are strong, resolute, determined. The charge of the servants of God is as the rush of a hurricane against a bowing wall and a tottering fence. In God is our confidence of victory. With God present no man's heart fails him; no doubt enters the host.

Strength Distributing Sweetness.— I have before now met with that popular artist Gustave Doré, and suggested subjects to him. Had he survived among us, and had another opportunity occurred, I would have pressed him to execute a statue of Samson handing out the honey; strength distributing sweetness; and it might have served as a perpetual reminder of what a Christian should be — a Conqueror and a Comforter, slaying lions and distributing honey.

Strength Through Weakness.— A man is never lost until he is *devoid of all strength.* See you the mariner who has fallen from the ship? As long as those brawny arms of his can stem the current, as long as he can buffet the waves and hurl them aside with the strong heart of resistance, he gives up nought for lost. Ay, and should his arms become weary, if he can float a little, and with one hand move himself amid the billows of the deep, he still thinks it is not all over yet. And while there is one particle of strength remaining his hopes are too buoyant to give himself up for a lost man. Suppose him to have grasped a spar; as long as ever those hands of his can, with a death-clutch, keep hold of that floating piece of timber, he does not consider himself lost. Fond hope still whispers in his ear, "Hold on, thou art not lost yet; some ship may cross this way, Providence may guide its path hither, and thou mayest yet be delivered. Hold on, thou art not lost while a sinew retains its might, while there is any vital force in thy frame." So, soul, thou canst never say thou art lost till thou feelest in thy heart an utter departure of all thy strength. Hast thou been brought to feel that there is nothing which of thyself thou canst do apart from the strength of the Holy Spirit? There was a time when thou couldst pray, when thou couldst repent, when thou couldst believe after thine own fash-

ion with thine own supposed strength: is that time all passed over now? Art thou saying, "I have no power to do any one of those things without grace from on high! I would, but can not pray; I would, but can not repent; this strong heart will not dissolve, altho I strive to melt it; this haughty mind will resist the Savior, altho I wish to be led in chains of grace a willing captive to my Lord?" Art thou brought to feel that if thy salvation depended upon one motion of thy soul in the right direction thou must be lost, for thou hast no spiritual strength? Art thou lying down shorn of all thy might, bereft of all help and hope in thyself; and dost thou confess, "I can do nothing without thee?" Well, then, thou art one of those whom Christ has come to save.

SYMPATHY

Christian Sympathy.— A young man called upon you a little while ago. He said, "Sir, you know my business. I have been struggling very hard, and you have kindly let me have some things on credit. But through the pressure of the times, I don't know how it is, I seem to get very hard up. I think, sir, if I could weather the next month, I might be able to get on well. I have every prospect of having a trade yet, if I could but have a little more credit, if you could possibly allow it." "Young man," you have said, "I have had a great many bad debts lately. Besides you do not bring me any good security; I can not trust you." The young man bowed, and left you. You did not know how he bowed in spirit as well as in body. That young man had a poor old mother and two sisters in the house, and he had tried to establish a little business that he might earn bread and cheese for them as well as for himself. For the last month they have eaten scarcely anything but bread and

butter, and the weakest tea has been their drink, and he has been striving hard; but some one, poorer than he seemed to be, did not pay him the litle debt that was due to him, and he could not pay you. And if you had helped him, it might have been all well with him; and now what to do he can not tell. His heart is broken, his soul is swollen within him. That aged mother of his, and those girls, what shall become of them? You did not know his agony, or else you would have helped him. But you ought to have known. You never should have dismissed his case until you had known a little more about him. It would not be business-like, would it? No, sir, to be business-like is sometimes to be nothing else than devil-like. But I would not have you business-like when it is so. Out on your business; be Christian-like.

Superficial Sympathy.— I have heard speak of a lady who was out in the snow one night, and was so very cold that she cried out, "Oh, those poor people that have such a little money, how little firing they have, and how pinched they must be! I will send a hundred weight of coals to twenty families, at the least." But I have heard say that, when she reached her own parlor, there was a fine fire burning, and she sat there with her feet on the fender, and enjoyed an excellent tea, and she said to himself, "Well, it is not very cold, after all. I do not think that I shall send those coals; at any rate, not for the present." The sufferer thinks of the sufferer, even as the poor help the poor.

The divine wonder is that this Lord of ours, "tho he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor," and now takes a delight in succoring the poor. Having been tempted, he helps the tempted; his own trials make him desire to bless those who are tried.

Sympathy Born of Experience.— We cannot comfort others if we have never been comforted ourselves. I have heard — and I am sure that it is so — that there is no comforter for a widow like one who has lost her husband. Those who have had no children, and have never lost a child, may talk very kindly, but they cannot enter into a mother's broken heart as she bows over yonder little coffin. If you have never known what temptations mean, you make poor work when attempting to succor the tempted. Our Lord obtained a blessing from suffering temptation; and, take my word for it, every one of you may do the same.

Brother, the Lord means to make of you a man that shall be used like Barnabas to be a "son of consolation." He means to make a mother in Israel of you, my dear sister, that when you meet with others who are sorely cast down, you may know how to drop in a sweet word by which they shall be comforted. I think you will one day say, "It was worth while to go through that sorrow to be enabled to administer relief to that wounded heart."

Sympathy.— "Mother," said a little girl once, "I cannot make it out; Mrs. Smith says I do her so much good. Poor Mrs. Smith has lost her husband, mother, and she is very sad. She sits and cries, and I get up and lay my cheek on her cheek, and I cry, and say that I love her, and then she says that she loves me, and that I comfort her."

Just so. That is the truest form of consolation; is it not? "Weep with them that weep." That is how God, my God, will hear me, feeling with me, sympathizing with me. "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them." So are we assured, but that is not all: "I am with thee, saith the Lord."

TALENTS

Do What You Can Do Best.— "As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place." I admired one thing greatly in our deceased friend, Mr. Worcester, who for so long a time kept the gate outside. When I once asked him whether he could not be serviceable to the church as an elder, he said that if he were elected to it he should decline the office, because, he said, "I can do my work as a gate-keeper, but I do not know what I could do as an elder." So he resolved to stick to the work in which he was acknowledged to good service. I would have each Christian man do the same.

Every Man in His Place.— There is some youth who is quite capable of assisting in a Ragged School: perhaps if he had a higher genius he might disdain the work, and so the Ragged School would be without its excellent teacher. There are litle spheres, and God will have little men to occupy them. There are posts of important duty, and men shall be found with nerve and muscle fitted for the labor. He has made a statue for every niche, and a picture for every portion of the gallery; none shall be left vacant; but since some niches are small, so shall be the statuettes that occupy them. To some he gives two talents, because two are enough, and five would be too many.

TESTIMONY

Won By His Wife's Faith.— I have read the story of a man who was converted to God by seeing the conduct of his wife in the hour of trouble. They had a lovely child, their only offspring. The father's heart doted on it perpetually, and the mother's soul was knit up in the heart of the little one. It lay sick upon its bed, and the par-

ents watched it night and day. At last it died. The father had no God: he rent his hair, he rolled upon the floor in misery, wallowed upon the earth, cursing his being, and defying God in the utter casting down of his agony. There sat his wife, as fond of the child as ever he could be; and though tears would come, she gently said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord." "What," said he, starting to his feet, "you love that child? I thought that when that child died you would break your heart. Here am I, a strong man; I am mad: here are you, a weak woman, and yet you are strong and bold; tell me what it is possesses you?" Said she, "Christ is my Lord, I trust in him; surely I can give this child to him who gave himself for me." From that instant the man became a believer. "There must," said he, "be some truth and some power in the gospel, which could lead you to believe in such a manner, under such a trial."

Tell Your Own Story.— There is never a more interesting story than that which a man tells about himself. The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner derives much of its interest because the man who told it was himself a mariner. He sat down, that man whose finger was skinny, like the finger of death, and began to tell that dismal story of the ship at sea in a great calm, when slimy things did crawl with legs over the shiny sea. The wedding guest sat still to listen, for the old man was himself a story. There is always a great deal of interest excited by a personal narrative. Virgil, the poet, knew this, and, therefore, he wisely makes Æneas tell his own story, and makes him begin it by saying, "In which I also had a great part myself." So if you would interest your friends, tell them what you felt yourself. Tell them how you were once a lost abandoned sinner, how the Lord met with you, how you bowed your knees, and

poured out your soul before God, and how at last you leaped with joy, for you thought you heard him say within you, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my name's sake." Tell your friends a story of your own personal experience.

An Old Saint's Inspiring Testimony.— I recollect in my younger days hearing a minister, blind with age, speak at the communion table, and bear witness to us young people, who had just joined the church, that it was well for us that we had come to put our trust in a faithful God; and as the good man, with great feebleness and yet with great earnestness, said to us, that he had never regretted that he had given his heart to Christ as a boy, I felt my heart leap within me with delight that I had such a God to be my God. His testimony was such as a younger man could not have borne: he might have spoken more fluently, but the weight of those eighty years at the back of it made the old man eloquent to my young heart. We who are growing gray in our Master's service ought not to be backward to speak well of his name. Why, my brethren, you will not be able to do so much good in heaven as you can on earth, for they all know about it up there, but men here need our witness to the God whom we have tried and proved.

Value of Testimony.— Often has a new convert written to a worldly friend to tell him of his great change and of his new joy, and that worldly friend has put the letter aside with a sneer or a jest; but after a while he has thought it over, and he has said to himself, "There may be something in it. I am a stranger to this joy of which my friend speaks, and I certainly need all the joy I can get, for I am dull enough." Let me tell you that all worldlings are not such fools as some would take them for; they are aware of an unrest within their bosoms, and they hunger after something better than this vain

world can give them; so that it frequently happens that as soon as they learn where the good is they accept it. Even if they do not hunger, I do not know any better way of making a man long for food than yourself to eat.

Bearing Testimony.— There was a spark once that got into the stubble, and the Angel of Discretion was there, and he said, "Stark, lie still, lie still, lie still; if you begin to consume, the next, and then the next, will get alight, and perhaps the whole threshing-floor will be in a blaze, and then the homestead, and then the village." But preach as he might, the fire would burn, and the Angel of Discretion had well-nigh burned his wings before he had turned to flee. And so there be some in our churches who are very angels of prudence. "Young men," say they, "don't speak too soon; don't attempt to do it till you are duly qualified." My dear sirs, if God has communicated to any man the secret of salvation by grace he cannot help telling it; and if the Lord has touched a man's tongue with a live coal, he will burn as well as the coal. If the new life has been given to him, it must find its way out, and be the means of conveying that life to others.

Experience of Aged Christians.— I recollect in a time of great despondency deriving wonderful comfort from the testimony of an aged minister who was blind, and had been so for twenty years. When he addressed us, he spoke of the faithfulness of God, with the weak voice of a tremulous old man, but with the firmness of one who knew what he said, because he had tasted and handled it. I thanked God for what he had said. It was not much in itself. If I had read it in a book, it would not have struck me; but as it came from him, from the very man who knew it and understood it, it came with force and with unction. So you experienced Christians,

if any others are silent, you must not be. You must tell the young ones of what the Lord has done for you. Why, some of you good old Christian people are apt to get talking about the difficulties, troubles, and afflictions you have met with more than about the succors, the deliverances, and the joys you have proved; not unlike those persons in "Pilgrim's Progress," who told poor Pilgrim about the lions, and giants, and dragons, and the sloughs, and hills, and all that could terrify and dishearten him. They might have mentioned all this, but they should also have told of Mr. Greatheart, and they should not have forgotten to speak of the eternal arm that sustains Christian in his pilgrimage. Tell the troubles, that were wise; but tell the strength of God that makes you sufficient, that is wiser still. Empty yourselves. If you have got experience, empty yourselves upon the earth.

TRIALS

Comfort in Trial.— I went some time ago into the house of our brother Stephenson; a good soldier of the cross was he: he fell asleep in Jesus; and when I saw his weeping sons and daughters, I felt, "I have easy work here." I said to them, "Why, what a mercy it is that your father is gone, for he has lingered long in pain, and you know how ready he was to enter into rest." That was very different from what happens sometimes. Only a little while ago a sister came to me weeping as if she would break her heart. "Ah, sir," said she, "my brother is dead, and he died without hope." It was a sad case, but then she had a God to repair to even under that sharp trial. But, when death comes into *your* house, you have no God! I knelt down and prayed with those poor weeping girls this morning, and, tho their father was but just dead, I marked that the voice of

prayer had evidently a soothing charm about it, and tho they wept, yet it seemed to sooth and pacify them. But some of you do not pray, and, therefore, this comfort cannot be yours.

Saved as by Fire.—"A young lady, who belonged to a church in the city of New York, married a young man who was not a Christian. He was a merchant, engaged in a lucrative business, and the golden stream of wealth flowed in upon him till he had amassed a large fortune. He accordingly retired from business, and went into the country. He purchased a splendid residence; fine trees waved their luxuriant foliage around it; here was a lake filled with fish, and there a garden full of rare shrubbery and flowers. Their house was fashionably and expensively furnished; and they seemed to possess all of earth that mortal could desire. Thus prospered, and plied with an interchange of civilities among her gay and fashionable neighbors, the piety of the lady declined, and her heart became wedded to the world. And it is not to be wondered at, that her three children, as they grew up, imbibed her spirit and copied her example. 'A severe disease,' it is said, 'demands a severe remedy;' and that God soon applied. One morning intelligence came that her little son had fallen into the fish-lake, and was drowned. The mother's heart was pierced with the affliction, and she wept and murmured against the providence of God. Soon afterwards, her only daughter, a blooming girl of sixteen, was taken sick of a fever and died. It seemed then as if the mother's heart would have broken. But this new stroke of the rod of a chastening Father seemed but to increase her displeasure against his will. The only remaining child, her eldest son, who had come home from college to attend his sister's funeral, went into the fields soon afterwards, for the purpose of hunting. In getting over

a fence, he put his gun over first to assist himself in springing to the ground, when it accidentally discharged itself and killed him! What then were that mother's feelings? In the extravagance of her grief, she fell down, tore her hair, and raved like a maniac against the providence of God. The father, whose grief was already almost insupportable, when he looked upon the shocking spectacle, and heard her frenzied ravings, could endure his misery no longer. The iron entered into his soul and he fell a speedy victim to his accumulated afflictions. From the wife and mother, her husband and all her children were now taken away. Reason returned, and she was led to reflection. She saw her dreadful backslidings, her pride, her rebellion; and she wept with the tears of a deep repentance. Peace was restored to her soul. Then could she lift up her hands to heaven, exclaiming, 'I thank thee, O Father! — the Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord.'"

Growing Great Through Trial.— When a shipwright builds a vessel, does he build it to keep it upon the stocks? Nay, he builds it for the sea and the storm. When he was making it he thought of tempests and hurricanes: if he did not, he was a poor shipbuilder. When God made thee a believer he meant to try thee; and when he gave thee promises, and bade thee trust them, he gave such promises as are suitable for times of tempest and tossing. Dost thou think God makes shams like some that have made belts for swimming, which were good to exhibit in a shop, but of no use in the sea? We have all heard of swords which were useless in war; and even of shoes which were made to sell, but were never meant to walk in. God's shoes are of iron and brass, and you can walk to heaven in them without their ever wearing out: and his life-belts, you may swim a thou-

sand Atlantics upon them, and there will be no fear of your sinking. His word of promise is meant to be tried and proved. O man, I beseech you do not treat God's promises as if they were curiosities for a museum, but use them as every day sources of comfort. Trust the Lord whenever your time of need comes on.

Rest Through Conflict.— There will be no climbing the hill of the Lord without effort; no going to glory without the violence of faith. I believe that the ascent to heaven is still, as Bunyan described it — a staircase, every step of which will have to be fought for. He heard sweet singers on the roof of the palace, singing,

> Come in! come in!
> Eternal glory thou shalt win."

Many had a mind to enter the palace and win that eternal glory; but then at the doorway stood a band of warlike men, with drawn swords, to wound and kill every man that ventured to enter. Therefore many who would have liked to have walked on the top of the palace did not care for so dangerous an enterprise; they desired the end, but not the way to it. At last there came one with a determined countenance, and he said to the writer with the inkhorn by his side, "Set down my name, sir"; and when his name was duly recorded, he drew his sword and rushed upon the armed men with all his might. It was a fierce conflict, but he meant to conquer or die, and he did conquer; he cut a lane through his enemies, and by and by he, too, was heard singing with the rest

> "Come in! come in!
> Eternal glory thou shalt win."

By conflict throughout a whole life we come to our rest; and there is no other way. You cannot go round to a

back-door, and enter into heaven by stealth. You must fight if you would reign.

Strong Through Struggle.— A soldier is trained by battles, and a mariner by storms. What can a man do when he has everything to his hand? Everything is possible to him, but so it is to every simpleton. He is truly a man who has nothing to assist him, and yet is aided by the opposition which confronts him. To sail against wind and tide would be more notable than to drift with gale and current. Is he not a true man who can turn to account the worst possible circumstances so as to produce the best possible results? He has an apportunity for distinguishing himself who is placed amid temptations and perils. In your life, good works are provided for,— "God hath before prepared that we should walk in them."

TRUST

Work and Trust.— That was sound philosophy of Mahomet's when the man said, "I have turned my camel loose, and trusted in providence." "No," answered he, "tie your camel up and then trust in providence." Do the best you can and trust in God. God never meant that faith in him should be synonymous with sloth. Why, for the matter of that, if it is all God's work, and that is to be the only consideration, there is no need for David to have a sling. Nay, there is not any need for David at all. He may go back, lie on his back in the middle of the field, and say, "God will do his work: he does not want me." That is how fatalists would talk, but not how believers in God would act. They say, "God wills it, therefore I am going to do it" — not "God does it, and therefore there is nothing for me to do." Nay, "Because God works by me, therefore I will work by his good hand upon me. He is putting

strength into his feeble servant, and making use of me as his instrument, good for nothing tho I am apart from him. Now will I run to the battle with alacrity, and I will use my sling with the best skill I have, taking quiet, calm, deliberate aim at that monster's brow, since I believe that God will guide the stone and accomplish his own end."

The Wisdom of Trust in God.— The child playing on the deck does not understand the tremendous engine whose beat is the throbbing heart of the stately Atlantic liner, and yet all is safe; for the engineer, the captain and the pilot are in their places, and well know what is being done. Let not the child trouble itself about things too great for it. Leave you the discovery of doubtful causes to him whose understanding is infinite; and as for yourself, be you still, and know that Jehovah is God. Unbelief misinterprets the ways of God; hasty judgment jumps at wrong conclusions about them; but the Lord knows his own thoughts. We are doubtful where we ought to be sure, and we are sure where we have no ground for certainty: thus we are always in the wrong. How should it be otherwise with us, since vain men would be wise, and yet he is born like a wild ass's colt? We are hard to tame and to teach; but as for the Lord, "his way is perfect."

> "His thoughts are high, his love is wise,
> His wounds a cure intend;
> And though he does not always smile,
> He loves unto the end."

Trust the Key to Life's Problem.— The world is a bleak house, a chill and empty corridor without God; and men are orphans, and life is hopeless and death is starless night, if Jesus is not known and loved. He who trusts his soul with Jesus has found the key of the great secret,

the clue of the maze. Henceforth he shall see, in all that smiles or rages around him in our changeful weather, pledges of the love of the Father, tokens of the grace of the son, and witnesses of the work of the Holy Ghost.

Trust in God.— Whatever trials the believer has, he has a God to fly to. "Look," said a poor woman to a lady who called to see her, "Look, ma'am, I'll show you all I'm worth. Do you see that cupboard, ma'am? Look in." The lady looked in, and saw nothing. "Do you see *this* cupboard?" said the woman. "Yes," said the lady, "but there is nothing in it but a dry crust." "Well," continued the woman, "do you see this chest?" "Yes, I see it; but it is empty," was the reply. "Well," said she, "that is all I am worth, ma'am; but I have not a doubt or fear with regard to my temporal affairs. My God is so good that I can still live without doubts and fears." She knew what it was to break through a troop and leap over a wall.

Trust and Service.— God never leaves true trust without work to do. It is not a presentation sword to be worn only on high days and holidays, neither is it like the old armor in the Tower of London, hung up to be looked at; no, true trust is for every-day wear and use, and between here and heaven it will be tested in every conceivable way. That sword will snap if it be not a true Jerusalem blade, and that armor will be pierced if it be not of proof, able to endure the battle-axe of fierce temptation.

WEAKNESS

The Appeal of Weakness.— As a certain town was being sacked, one of the rough soldiery is said to have spared a little child, because it said, "Please, sir, don't kill me, I am so little." The rough warrior felt the cogency of the plea. You may yourselves just plead thus with

God. "O God, do not destroy me! I deserve it, but oh, I am so little! Turn thy power upon some great thing, and let thy bowels move with compassion towards me!"

WEALTH

Seeking Heavenly Riches.— The Roman Emperor fitted out a great expedition and sent it to conquer Britain. The valiant legionaries leaped ashore, and each man gathered a handful of shells and went back to his bark again — that was all. Some of you are equally foolish. You are fitted by God for great endeavors and lofty enterprises, and you are gathering shells: your gold and your silver, your houses and your lands — they are mere empty shells — and heaven and everlasting life you let go. Like Nero, you send to Alexandria for sand for your amusements, and send not for wheat for your starving souls. O fools and slow of heart, when shall God, who gave you souls, give those souls wisdom that you may seek after the true treasure, the real pearl, the heavenly riches? "Well," cries one, "how is heaven to be had?" It is to be had only by a personal seeking after it. I have read of one who, when drowning, saw the rainbow in the heavens. Picture him as he sinks; he looks up, and there if he sees the many-colored bow, he may think to himself, "There is God's covenant-sign that the world shall never be drowned, and yet, here I am drowning in this river."

Drowned by Riches.— I have heard of one, the steward ess of an American vessel, who when the ship was sinking, saw heaps of gold coin scattered upon the cabin floor by those who had thrown it there in the confusion of their escape: she gathered up large quantities of it, wrapped it round her waist, and leaped into the water; she sank like a millstone, as tho she had studiously

prepared herself for destruction. I fear that many of you traders are diligently collecting guarantees for your surer ruin, planning to bury yourselves beneath your glittering hoards. Be wise in time. My voice, nay, my heart pleads with you for your soul's sake and for Christ's sake, be not like Ahitophel, who set his house in order and hanged himself. Take sure bond for enduring happiness, invest in indisputable securities, have done with infinite risks, and be assured for life everlasting.

Debased by Wealth.— Strange to say, we have known many Christians who have forgoten much of their love to Christ when they have risen in the world. "Ah!" said a woman, who had been wont to do much for Christ in poverty, and who had had a great sum left her, "I cannot do as much as I used to do." "But how is that?" said one. Said she, "When I had a shilling purse I had a guinea heart, but now I have a guinea purse I have only a shilling heart." It is a sad temptation to some men to get rich. They were content to go to the meeting-house and mix with the ignoble congregation, while they had but little; they have grown rich; there is a Turky carpet in the drawing-room; they have arrangements now too splendid to permit them to invite the poor of the flock, as they once did, and Christ Jesus is not so fashionable as to allow them to introduce any religious topic when they meet with their new friends. Besides this, they say they are now obliged to pay this visit and that visit, and they must spend so much time upon attire, and in maintaining their station and respectability, they cannot find time to pray as they did. The house of God has to be neglected for the party, and Christ has less of their heart than ever he had. "Is this thy kindness to thy friend?" And hast thou risen so high that thou art ashamed of Christ? and art thou grown so rich, that Christ in his poverty is despised?

Alas! poor wealth! alas! base wealth! alas! vile wealth! 'Twere well for thee if it should be all swept away, if a descent to poverty should be a restoration to the ardency of thine affection.

The Idolotry of Money.— One can easily overlook the fault of making too much of children, and wife, and friends, altho very grievous in the sight of God; but alas; there are some that are too sordid to love flesh and blood; they love dirt, mere dirty earth, yellow gold. It is that on which they set their hearts. Their purse, they tell us, is dross; but when we come to take aught from it, we find they do not think it is so. "Oh," said a man once, "if you want a subscription from me, Sir, you must get at my heart, and then you will get at my purse." "Yes," said I, "I have no doubt I shall, for I believe that is where your purse lies, and I shall not be very far off from it."

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